


THE CANTAB

SHANE LESLIE

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THE CANTAB

BY THE SAME WRITER

THE OPPIDAN. A NOVEL OF ETON
DOOMSLAND. A NOVEL OF IRELAND

THE CANTAB

BY

SHANE LESLIE

Tax not the royal saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the architect who planned—
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed scholars only—this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence !
Give all thou canst : high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less or more.

WORDSWORTH.

Oh what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life.

GEORGE MEREDITH.

Suave, mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.

LUCRETIVS,

LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS
1926

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DIVIDES KINGSMEN

PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION

THIS book was unfortunate enough to be condemned in passages by the Episcopate and the Magistrature. It was voluntarily withdrawn in deference to the Roman Obedience before the author was aware of proceedings on the part of the State. The incriminated passages and more have been innocuously overwritten. Many phrases remain throughout the book illustrating not the author's convictions but the imprudences and irreverences germane to thoughtless youth. Venerable Institutions and Churches as well as academical characters and types have been translated into a medium, which corresponds to the goliardic in song and to the gargoyle in architecture. This may be a considerable error of taste, but the scenes of sexual reality were more than a misjudgment even on the part of an author anxious to delineate the moral as well as the religious confusion to which sentient and intelligent adolescence is liable. These passages were intended as preludes to a searching study of the Social Evil in the promised Sequel. This Sequel contained scenes, which the author could hardly bear to write and which the public has shown that it cannot bear to read. To save some trouble and without inflicting any loss on literature, the author has destroyed the Sequel.

S. L.

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CHAPTER I

CHERRYUMPTON

NOT many miles from the Ancient Borough and noble University of Cambridge stands the old Rectory of Cherryumpton in the tree-strangled and lilac-lit hamlet of the name. A yew-shaded drive and a little rectangular apple-garth within a wall of rubrical plinths fill the rectorial acre. The better harvested acre of God adjoins one side of the wall, while the acres of the Trywilliam family lie behind wind-chopped elms on the other. The Rectory is only a bungled-looking bungalow, the brick and tiled patchwork of two centuries, compared to the Georgian Manor House and the restored Norman Church, whose cream-plastered tower shows in winter-time behind the grille of a million naked twigs and rides through the summer over their green billowy tops like a crenellated cardboard box at sea.

The straggly street of Cherryumpton never seemed equal or proportional to the solemn and stately Church, which resembled a high-hatted, much-arched Arch-deacon wedded to some forlorn and rural little bride. All the week they might seem severally occupied, the large male Church untroubled and aloof, contemplative of next Sunday and of a thousand Sundays to come, while the wifelike hamlet was fussed and flurried about many things many times every day. On Sundays alone she sat quiet, or, at the voice of her booming husband, tripped into his bosom in adoring submission to his pompous will. And the next week was the next.

Nothing ever happened to the Church between

Sundays save the irruption of the old female sexton Mrs. Judbud, who dusted on Saturdays, pew-opened on Sundays, and wiped up on Mondays.

There was a curious contrast between the line of soaring pillars, the chamfered mouldings and floriated stone traceries, and the mean pews, cheap hassocks, Carpenter's Gothic pulpit, and low unlighted trestle of an altar. The Church was like the finely proportioned crumbling white skeleton of a giant tied up with a few shabby ribands. Dead white and gaping were the window eyes. The necklike chancel was separated from the ribbed nave by the six painted stumps of an old rood screen, which a saw had neatly reformed from garish idolatry in the sixteenth century. The chancel was glazed with white diamond panes except for the middle light of the East fenestry, which was like a crazy quilt of many-coloured fragments, an *omnium gatherum* of mediæval reds and blues, cobalts and chlorines, old golds and dingy yellows like the cells in a painter's mind. Antiquarians sometimes sorted the pudding: here a decapitated seraph or an angel with the angles hacked off, or the benedictional hand of Thomas à Becket, a cutting of yellow hair from Judas, with a half ALLELUIA and a chip of ANGELUS stained in broad black Gothic letter. Through the splayed windows in the tower and the neat perpendicular lights of the nave, through quarries of dusty crystal streamed rays as pure and colourless as the doctrines taught on Sundays. In spite of Puritan and iconoclast, the old Parish Church kept a few time-worn Catholic heirlooms like a Prima Donna who has known better days and treasures some unpawned jewel in the twilight of exile, for the country churches of England contain a choice collection of the ritual growth of ages—screens and chalices, carved roofs and aumbrys, painted tombs and wrought imagery; but so singly and infrequently that each relic has fallen into the position of a parish curiosity. The Church of England, the *Ecclesia Anglicana*, is indeed like unto a Bride once kept by

the King of Heaven, that has since been cast into the almshouse of the State.

The pride of Cherryumpton was the brass tomb of a superb Crusader, who had survived the gun-smelting Parliamentarians as well as the chisels of Gothic restorers. With grimmest grin and legs crossed he flatly defied the weekly washing administered by Mrs. Judbud as well as the tracing-papers of those enthusiasts who spend their holidays taking black and yellow rubbings from mediæval Church brasses. By charging half a crown per rub, successive rectors made the Crusader pay half Mrs. Judbud's salary. Sir Roger de Cherryumpton had survived fame and defame, and across the centuries he inspired a legendary chivalry and wonder, almost a godlike sentiment. Local saint or god he would have been, had not all gods been killed in England and gone with the good ballads and the Great Bustards. But the pious soul of Mrs. Judbud venerated him, and there was tenderness in the way she polished and dried the cuts and crevices in the brass. She might have been scrubbing the Almighty's buttons.

There was a certain alloy of metachemical irony in this brass over which the centuries remained inscrutable. As a matter of fact, this Sir Roger had never reached Holy Land, his Crusade having been limited to the drunken massacre of some Byzantine Greeks and the ravaging of some Eastern women on the Christian side of the Bosphorus. He had by slow stages returned to England, his body scarred with strange disease and his mind troubled by what he considered oriental sorceries. After long and sickly reflection he had made a pious end and received everlasting memory in brass, this experimental soldier of the Cross, *cuius animae propitiatur Deus* his inscription begged. His wasted dust had long since been blown through the chinks of the tomb-altar, passed into body of worm or gizzard of thrush, become owl's dropping or blowfly's egg, or floated in fine sun-spun particles which spent the whole week settling upon pew

and pulpit, to be sent flying again every Saturday by Mrs. Judbud, who frequently observed to the Rector, 'Law! where all that dratted dust do come from I don't know, with the Church locked up all week, 'xcept for them auntyqueerians polishing Saint Jarge by the hour.'

To her the Crusader had taken romantic shape as she swilled his tomb with soap and water. He was the only mystical streak under her poor old bonnet, in which rumours and rheumatics, patience and complainings, the cures of last century and the colds of next winter, lay strangely mixed and assorted. She had a sort of wifely feeling about 'Saint Jarge,' not that he reminded her in the least of the old man she had left fallow in the clay outside. It had been a relief to her to bury her sottish lie-in bed twenty years ago, and what faint femininity remained in her went towards the brass Crusader, as she scrubbed the powerful limbs wrapped in the chain-mail she mistook for worsted. The morbid would compare her sentiment unjustly with that of the Spanish student in Rome who fell in love with the marmoreal Venus in the Vatican, but Mrs. Judbud's was no more than a charwoman's fancy for a gentleman long deceased. Mrs. Judbud curtseyed to no man save the Rector, who dimly seemed like God on an off day or in dull weather. To the Lady of the Manor, Lady Trywilliam, she also dipped, for her Ladyship had not only represented the Queen socially as long as anybody could remember, but had taken pains to impress on her dependents how closely she resembled Queen Victoria in manners and features. And sometimes on a May morning when the sun shone upon her dear old Crusader, Mrs. Judbud dropped him an unseen curtsey before applying Monkey Brand soap.

'Law! how well he do stand the years, don't he?' she blabbed as the Rector of Cherrympton entered for his Saturday inspection. 'Yes verily, Mrs. Judbud,' answered Canon Edward Stornington; 'he has seen all my predecessors depart this world, and he will see us.' And he began marking the Lessons for the morrow. 'The

Canon was famous for his sonorous enunciation of Holy Writ and also for the brevity (not alas of his sermons) but of the texts he chose for sermons. He was fond of preaching from abrupt phrases that were generally wholly devoid of spirituality and sometimes of meaning, such as 'she made him a little coat,' or from single words such as 'Tush!' or 'Woe!' He believed it was essential to surprise or shock his audience in his opening words, and with sincere deliberation he chose the excited words of Isaiah, 'Ho all ye!' for the morrow's text.

He had never produced any of those works of Biblical exegesis or historical erudition which like gloomy lanterns light the path to high Anglican preferment. He had not even done the overdone St. John, the Gospel that nobody knew who wrote, possibly not even St. John. The Canon diverted his talents to roses and mediæval dictionaries. His whole mind had turned into lexicography, like a huge multiplying hive of regular hexagonal syllabic cells. He had ceased to nourish or breed ideas. His mind expressed itself in floods of synonyms, and his conversation resembled word-lists. He was an Anglo-Saxon purist, and was always trying to revive or introduce purer or more expressive words into daily speech. Let it be said that bookish was a mild epithet to describe even the more human side of his character. He had reached a stage when his genius could only be genial to grammar, and his diction had become simply that of the dictionary.

Only those who lived with him could become used to his speech. He sounded more pedantic than poetical when he called a burglar a 'lift-latch,' or alluded to the race of bats as 'flittermice.' But many rare and lovely and lonely words of his became embodied in his son's brain. Edward was brought up 'to pare his horn' instead of cutting his nails. The paternal hobbies of Astronomy and Botany were studied as 'star-craft' and 'wort-cunning.' Meteors were known as 'firedrakes,' and the beloved dictionaries as 'word-hoards.' The Canon used a 'glass-wright' to repair his windows, and

spoke of children being 'bishopped' instead of 'confirmed.' The Lady of the Manor was constantly annoyed by hearing her favourite collection of shagreen called 'houndfishskin.' He referred to Mrs. Stornington's 'crisping pins,' and insisted personally on suffering from 'emerods.' Edward duly ablacted was set to play in the little area of the appleterre bounded by wainhouse and rick-steddles from an outside world he could only judge by the colours which flew and floated between the horsebeeches and elms.

Canon Edward Stornington came from the old school. His Church was clean, tidy and unemotional. His idea of a visit to the sanctuary was not to do obeisance to the altar, but to receive one from his charwoman. Provided everything and everybody was kept in their proper places he was content. He refused to ritualise his altar or to change the flowers in his old-fashioned garth, which was divided between sunflowers and Canterbury Bells leaning against the walls and apple-trees bowing to the shaven lawn. He kept space also for the southernwood or 'old man' which Mrs. Judbud used to scatter in the chancel and front pews of a Sunday, and for the roses which he was fond of crossing, pollenising and raising in new shades and scents. He associated the rose with the English Constitution and the Tudor Church-settlement. Canterbury Bells spoke for themselves. Orchids he looked upon as foreign and almost immoral, while his insular mind made distinction between French plums and honest English pippins. It was the way he said it that made it seem unlikely that any fruit except the apple would be found growing in his garden. 'Apples and Angels are the two most beautiful words in the English language. Apples and Angels. . . .'

Having chosen his text, he was moving homeward with only a wayward glance upon the Canterbury Bells playing aerial chimes or the big bulbous-faced sunflowers circling heliolatrous wheels of yellow flame on their five-foot stalks. They made him think of Elijah's chariot, sup-

posing that famous vehicle could ever have been housed in his derelict Rectory stables as a sign to the thoughtless. He had once preached on that chariot as a prophetic foreshowing of the coming of motor cars. He hugged himself still at the surprise he had sent through his congregation. . . . He was content in life with sunflowers and Canterbury Bells. He did not like sweet-peas. They were vulgar and without breeding. They were the Nonconformists of the garden bed.

As the Canon approached the Rectory, his benevolent wife watched him with pensive admiration from behind window blinds. With the years a thoughtful strain had perhaps greyed the brisk wonderment she used to feel for his qualities. It was eighteen years since she had married him, in the expectation that he would prove another Bishop Stubbs or a second Dean Milman. He had impressed her then with his great learning. She had wondered at his wise face and wonderful gifts, she had wondered at his priestly presence and wondered of the future, and the present found her still wondering. Somehow so little had come of it all, except Son Edward. Truly the Rector had been made a Canon of Ely, but chiefly, as she suspected and knew, owing to the impetuous friendship of Lady Trywilliam, the Lady of the Manor, for the Bishop's titled aunt. But her Ladyship's boasted power in the higher realms of patronage had not been otherwise successful. Premier after Premier had passed over the claims of Canon Stornington for the Bishop's Bench, with the same incredible lack of feeling with which the late Sir Julius Trywilliam was perpetually missed from the Cabinets. At first Mrs. Stornington had blamed the Premiers, then her Ladyship. She now blamed the Canon himself, but very inwardly.

Mrs. Stornington was a plain practical soul, obviously untalented but secretly ambitious. All women desire, but women's desires take different form. Mrs. Stornington had never desired anything she ought not to do. But she was consumed with desire to see her husband

do things he could not do. She was always thinking of the great Bishop Stubbs, and if only her husband could have performed the Stubbsian rôle, she knew with the certainty of a divine call that she could play the part of a Bishop's lady. Not only would the position redound enormously to his credit, but it would suit her to be the veiled Lady, as it were, behind the Veil of the Temple, the hidden hand upon the crosier, the unseen partner on the diocesan throne!

But there she was, helplessly beholden in advance to Lady Trywilliam, who alone could touch the political pull necessary for the Canon's advancement. It was poor Mrs. Stornington's constant cross, for in her heart, and in a far more secret place than where she cherished ambition, lay her unhissed hate for Lady Trywilliam. She resented not being the first Lady in Cherryumpton. As Rector's wife, she was completely outclassed by the most bountiful of Lady Bountifuls. Everybody was nervous of Lady Trywilliam except her Etonian son, the present Sir Julius. Her Ladyship was under the impression that the parish regarded her as an angel in ermine. She kept parishioners moving. She ordered them to respect herself and adore God. When they were ill, she ordered them to eat her soups and to show their gratitude by immediately getting well. She ordered people to Church and children to School, and at Election time she drove voters to the poll and ordered them to vote Tory. Though insistent to her inferiors, she had a great heart and a wit that knew no superior. If her exhortations filled the parish, her *bons mots* travelled the three kingdoms, and more than one diner-out carried her last jest as a passport. Her most curious failing was inability to remember family names, which her imagination supplied often too brilliantly at the last moment. For instance, she would refer to the Canon as Mornington Canon, who had been her husband's favourite jockey. Mrs. Stornington would be indignant, but Mrs. Judbud submitted to the appellation of—Jemima Mud!

Lady Trywilliam knew that she held the whip-hand, and ventured sometimes to override Mrs. Stornington. Mrs. Stornington always obeyed, but with a ghastly struggle within. Her ambition was always stronger than her hate, which she subdued to truly Christian measure. She forgave and forgave her parochial bully for the sake of her diocesan ambition. When she became a Bishop's lady she knew she would take precedence of Lady Trywilliam. What if Lady Trywilliam had been a Saint Loo, pronounced 'slew,' a family of whom she was as sick of hearing as the Trywilliams themselves! The Saint Loos had permeated the lower Peerage since the Wars of the Roses, and their blood was connected with all the hunting counties of England. It was understood that for a Saint Loo to marry a Trywilliam had been little less than a mesalliance. But it had been done, and the consequences were upon Trywilliam dependents.

Mrs. Stornington was not an embittered woman. She was too active to allow stagnant tempers to stain her vision. She let irritation and fury blow like steam through her black-kettle shape. Mouth and nose made appropriate vent-holes. As she collected rumour or scandals her mouth went Oh, Oh! with the variant Fi, Fi! When she heard Lady Trywilliam mentioned, her nose went Sniff, Sniff! with lip variations Poo, Poo! But when her dear husband or his merits or fortunes were approached, she went Puff! Puff! Puff!

She was watching the Canon as he trod delicately upon grass which had undoubtedly suffered moisture some hours previously. 'Edward, Edward dear! have you enjoyed your quiet minute in the Church? I know how distracting we all are to you at home. And have you found a text for your sermon?'

The Canon nodded gravely. 'My dear, I have found a little text, a little poem in three syllables, of a hidden, I might say cryptic, almost apocalyptic meaning.' Mrs. Stornington knew better than to ask the exact words. Sufficient unto the Sabbath would be the little surprise

thereof. 'I think Edward must be waiting for his evening lesson, if you can find time to take him now.' The Canon hastened step and said, 'If you see the dear boy, ask him to join me with his Lucretius in the study.'

Mrs. Stornington sighted Son Edward pulling the garden roller over the lawn, but not too hastily to remove the stray worms and beetles. She shouted to him to join his father above. She was the only person that shouted in that house, just as there is only room for one echo on a cliff. In a ducal palace there is room for Duke and Duchess to shout without hearing each other, but in a quiet country rectory there can be only one shout, and as the Canon had all the say in the pulpit, it seemed only fair that Mrs. Stornington should shout during the week.

So she shouted her son back to study and resumed her secret aggrievement of soul. It was not that she wished to be a Bishop's lady for herself. It was for her boy's sake. The recognition that his father sat clad in magpie and samite in the House of Lords (unless he was made one of those mule suffragans), would help the boy morally and socially. It must make a better man of him. It was the Canon's duty to exhibit public qualifications for Episcopacy. Why could he never write a History of the Pagan Cultures instead of bleating about Foreign Missions, which no doubt had to be kept up, but which she understood from Lady Trywilliam were uninteresting to Premiers? Her thwarted ambitions were rapidly channelling in her son. Both parents were blissfully expectant and hopeful over his approaching career at Cambridge. In her nervousness whether he would take a scholarship at King's College she hushed the little worm of diocesan disappointment, which never quite died in her nice russet pippin of a heart.

Edward had been brought up by Jeanne, the French nurse, once lady's maid to Lady Trywilliam. He was supposed to have picked up a conversational knowledge of French because Jeanne used to sing the songs of Old

France to him in bed. ‘*Au clair de la lune*’ was as familiar to him as any refrain from Hymns Ancient and Modern. It was an anodyne in childish miseries. Otherwise he had not acquired the Gallic tongue, for Jeanne was a silent, blunt-faced Norman woman, whom Lady Trywilliam had brought from France twenty years before and, shortly before pension time seemed due, had foisted on the Rectory, and had intrigued to recover ever since in vain. Mrs. Stornington had hopes that her boy would learn French, and the Canon admired his broad-mindedness in tolerating a Roman Catholic under his roof. As a matter of fact, Jeanne kept her religion to herself, and made no attempt to commit idolatries either in Cambridge or elsewhere. The only apparent sign of her presence was the improvement in Mrs. Stornington’s dress, which commenced to colour with the Church year. In Lent she wore a purple bodice and a white jacket with gold trimmings for Easter. Black, it was true, figured for the rest of the year, but so correct was her liturgy that on Holy Saturday, when the Church passes from mourning to joy, she would appear in her purple cloak but allow her white jacket to flash behind the chancel rails. ‘Is that mad woman putting on a surplice?’ Lady Trywilliam asked aloud from her pew, and finding Jeanne irrecoverable, demanded her dismissal.

Lady Trywilliam dressed quaintly herself. Since Jeanne’s departure she had returned to the early Victorian bonnet. In her time she had left one great mark on English dress. Weary of perpetually laundering the white stockings of her daughters, she had launched them in the first seen pairs of black, whence all hose of colour had been developed since, as the best historians of Drapery will admit. Her daughters had been well paired if not Peered, and now ruled manors and parishes of their own. Only one still kept within occasional reach of her Ladyship’s shout, Mina, a fine Grecian-looking woman who had married well in Sussex. Lady Trywilliam in giving a heavenward turn to her daughters’ minds had

not intended the heavenward tilt to their noses. The Saint Loo nasology had been wrecked by the late Sir Julius. Mina often came home to see Mama, whose contempt for the Trywilliam stock and relations she shared. She had reached the stage in her life when she was disputing the Trywilliam plainness in her features with her heritage of Saint Loo good looks. The Saint Loos made handsome women. The Trywilliams, like so much of the man-made stock of England, specialised in fine-looking men. Her Ladyship could forgive the Trywilliams a good deal for the beauty of her son Julius. He was a golden-haired Achaean in cricketing pads, who was acquiring form, chiefly in cricket, at that historical nursery of the Saint Loos, Eton College. The Trywilliams were a Harrovian family, but that had been forgotten.

At the other end of the village Edward Stornington was brought up chiefly by Jeanne, but a little by Mrs. Judbud. Each loved him more than any child of their own. All his early memories returned to their care. When he felt ill in the nursery, Mrs. Judbud would be sent to the village apothecary to buy old-fashioned drugs, wormwood or treacle or 'manna,' and Jeanne would put him to bed and sing him to sleep. He lived in hopes of seeing the children dance on the Bridge of Avignon, because she was always singing about it.

Edward believed everything they told him. He once saw some fireworks at a coming-of-age festival in the neighbourhood, and firmly attributed them to angels. Somebody said that angels were the cause and that lightning was God turning on and off the electric light. It was the first direct proof he had received that religion was true. From Mrs. Judbud Edward learnt the dangerous fact that if he said the Lord's Prayer backwards in the middle of the night the Devil would appear. He grew up with a general idea that wickedness was confined to children, and that to save his soul and be assured of Heaven he had only to join the unreprimandable company of grown-ups.

CHAPTER II

OUT OF HARM'S WAY

LIFE in Cherryumpton Rectory was an Anglican idyll, restful, soothing and industrious, and except for maternal shouts, indescribably quiet. Son Edward had always been trebly protected from the world. The very hamlet and trees seemed to symbolise defence against exterior wickedness and bleakness. The gaunt elms with their awkward criss-cross boughs looked like a ring of green *chevaux de frise*, and the neat white cottages (as though any cottages within bounty of Ladies Bountiful could refrain from being neat or white) stretched like low bulwarks into the drained fenlands. The Rectory wall and the yew hedge nestling to the very foot of the fortalice tower developed an inner line of preservative. Son Edward not only went without blemish or blame, but his milk-white face gave the impression that he had never been assaulted by more than a gnat! Prophylactic environment had brought him to the age of Matriculation at a University without knowing the meaning of sex. He had not even noticed the waggishness of dogs or the coquetry of cats in the animal world. He was conscientious, and at the least suggestion liable to scruple. He was a quickly obedient, but not a painless learner. He was not brilliant, nor an accurate scholar, but he felt flashes of appreciation and delight amid his grammatical gropings. He worked eight hours every day without half-holidays, and if his father hinted that his work was not up to standard he worked a supererogatory hour in bed. There was a touch of headstrong determination in him. He knew nothing about facts,

for his way of mastering the fact of a headache was to work extra time.

His ear had become attuned to Latin and Greek poetry by sheer plodding, and he was seldom astray on the rights and wrongs of classical syntax. His conscience and his soul were engrossed in approaching examinations. Failure he would account as sheer wrongdoing on his part, or even as evidence of divine displeasure. Sin as systematically viewed by the Church or the State he knew not. He attended Church service because he could not conceive people preferring otherwise, and he adopted the articles of belief as self-evident. Counter-opinions never struck him. Of course there were people who believed the world was flat, and Dissenters who went to shanties of their own. His father even mentioned atheists in his sermons, but Edward was content to sit still and swallow the sanctified sediment of the ages, from Adam and Eve to the Athanasian Creed, from the Thirty-Nine Articles to the text of the Canon's next sermon, which was not always a surprise to Edward, who often went to Church in the knowledge of the coming text. Sometimes the Canon had asked him to look it up in the Greek, or perhaps had read a few paragraphs of analysis to his son, and Edward would feel as proud as Punch. But sin he knew not.

The Ten Commandments affected him as almost unnecessary. He assented without a second thought to that terrible ten-barred gate which most folk find between the road that is strait and the pastures that are pleasant. Thou shalt do no murder ! Thou shalt not steal ! Thou shalt not commit adultery ! Who wanted to be a highwayman nowadays ? Who wanted to commit murder ? Who wanted his neighbour's donkey or his wife ? Remote and quaint they seemed, as the strange prohibition which scholars placed in the original Decalogue, ' Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk ! ' His father had preached twice on that curious text, taking it once as the basis of some remarks on behalf

of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and on another occasion during the week set aside by the Archbishops for the national campaign against gastric diseases. The Canon had strong views on the hygiene of the table, and believed that this text providentially forbade eating tinned American meat at tea. To one Commandment only Edward felt that he could give any practical attention, and that was the solemn injunction to honour father and mother, quite apart from the life insurance policy promised to *bona fide* subscribers.

At his mother's cheery shout Edward had dropped the handle of the garden roller and sauntered into the study, a long, crooked room lying under the eaves, and lit through one bay bulge of a window. Through this window he was accustomed to watch the busy church-yard life, and the coming and going of birds and seasons. The dewy yard with its sparkling alternates of shower and sunshine seemed to embody the life and beauty of an outside world from which he was temporarily cut off by constant classical digestion. The chewed pen, the thumbed Greek lexicon, and the ever-rustling Latin dictionary, were the circumstance of his fingers and occupiers of his brain, but his print-worn eyes were always assuaged by glimpsing the meals of thrushes, the noisy proceedings of starlings' clubs, or the travelling preparations of excitable swallows. Edward vaguely hoped that when he was laid in that delectable yard he would still hear the buzz and hum of the insects, and continue his avian sympathies. Meantime the Classics were life's portion. He was piling up the knowledge and annotation of texts like money in a bank but at slight interest. The great investments of life were not made. He had hardly made choice, only speculation of a career. Mrs. Judbud guessed, and rightly, that his eyes were fixed on the Christian ministry. 'Law, Master Edward was born 'alf a Curate.'

Winter and summer had passed, and winter again, and

the King's College Scholarship examination was on the horizon. It would be his first swim into life, and he shuddered when he woke in the night and failed to collect the exact sense of some Homeric phrase. Sometimes he visioned Greek enclitics flying like imps in the room during the steady grind of the daytime. Interruptions were few, though the train of work could be pleasantly broken by sighting a mourner in the graveyard, or the passing of Mrs. Judbud with her pontifical mop and pail of musty fluids. It was always a relaxation to glance at the jutting crop of funereal stone and the evergreens that rose like alien weeds amid the harvest of many little rural lives—so unimportant, excepting the occasional grave of a Rector or of a Cambridge Don. For in the neighbouring graveyards of some ten miles' circuit round the University lay Cambridge Dons and Deans and Tutors in noticeable sprinkling. He had visited vicarages and rectories round Cherryumpton with his father, and the graves of learning and the tombs of academical talent always filled him with earnest awe. These were they who had mastered the Classics in their day and had been found worthy of Church preferment and College Fellowship. As he marked their Degrees, whether Masters of Arts or Doctors of Divinity or Law, he felt like a recruit standing amid the graves of a famous battlefield. They had fought the good fight, whether they had tussled with texts or fought against the ignorance and wickedness of this world. Might he only live to do likewise! He too would be a scholar of the Christ! Cambridge he only visited as a great treat, and even excursions to neighbouring rectories were rare and therefore all the more enjoyable. The real relaxation of the day was his solitary trip down the road in the twilight. When the white owl sallied out of the big Tithe Barn and slid like a loose cone of crumpled white paper across the graveyard, he knew it was time to mark the passage (the Canon forbade dog's-earing books) and to run down the little dark stairway into the gloaming. He always took

the long road stretching between Cambridge and London. It was a dreary piece of mileage running from village to village, each set in an oasis of elm with no trees in sight except little lines of mangled willows marking tributaries of the Cam. Festoons of wire stretched tautly from pole to pole, supplying an incessant music which Edward never knew whether to attribute to the wind or to the flow of telegrams between Cambridge and London.

'Law, that dear boy don't have enough fresh air,' was Mrs. Judbud's comment on his horarium. 'He sits tied to his desk as fast as Saint Jarge is to his tomb. I call it cruelty to innocents I do.' But Mrs. Judbud's advice was not asked by the Canon or Mrs. Stornington or Son Edward, who understood that he was being brought up under particularly generous and Christian conditions, and was grateful accordingly both to human and divine creators.

Nobody heard Mrs. Judbud's philosophies and comments on life except her adopted niece Veronica, who lived with her in the little old insanitary, rose-smothered cottage below the Church. Veronica's life ensampled Cherryumpton existences. Her birth was illegitimate, owing to the close intimacy in which Mrs. Judbud's family had been brought up with neighbours sharing the same set of cottages. Nobody ever claimed Veronica's paternity, and she went through life as Mrs. Judbud's niece. It did not seem to matter, as the family honour was left to aunt and niece to explain. The others went to sea or drifted into lodging-house keeping at Cambridge. Veronica survived on Mrs. Judbud's hands, and was being carefully trained for service in the Hall. 'It do be an awful thing 'anging round the girl's neck,' said Mrs. Judbud, 'to be a chance-child as the Canon calls 'er, but anyhow it's a family concern entirely, which is one good thing. None of these messyalliances, as her Ladyship calls them.'

Veronica had been allowed to share the games of Julius and Edward in a number of obedient guises. She was always the hunted stag or Bluebeard's wife or something to be captured or killed. Veronica would have interested the eugenicist. Unlike most of the incestuous-born, who duplicate the weaknesses and ailments of their breed, she was an instance tending to the reverse. Whatever health or neatness of limb had ever graced the Judbud family was concentrated in her diminutive form. She was soldered strong and knitted to perfect pattern. Her violet eyes peered from a sharp-cut, white-skinned face, wondering what the world had in store for her. Quick and agile, she was the cleaning, polishing and tidying factor in Mrs. Judbud's cottage, which looked neat and clean enough to draw encomium from Lady Trywilliam on the manorial system that permitted such comfort to the poor. The leaking drain which was slowly sapping Mrs. Judbud did not lower the vitality of Veronica. Youth's invincible sap ran beneath her shapely modesty.

With her quiet prettiness and hidden charm Veronica had already attracted the boyhood of Cherryumpton, but was understood to suffer restriction from Mrs. Judbud, who, however, would urge her to cheer up poor Master Edward, whom she met Sunday by Sunday at the Canon's Bible Class. 'I do declare that boy never plays a game. He don't know the world and he ain't going to, and it's my opinion he'll die of *cholera morbus* 'fore he's twenty.' Mrs. Judbud never gave any reason for this startling prophecy, but she believed that book-worms entered the entrails of confirmed readers and conveyed disease.

Quite unknown to himself, Edward was the subject of sympathetic comments in Cherryumpton. Lady Trywilliam had several times pronounced a decided opinion that he was being brought up a muff. Her son Julius, though inclined to scorn, felt a certain pity for another boy cut off from the school world in which he had attained

more stature than grace among his fellows. The village retained interest and respect for Parson's son, but thought it odd that he should never be seen except with the evening owl and on Sundays. It was understood that he was undergoing the work needed to make him a scholar and a parson. Gossips said that Mrs. Stornington made him wash up at nights and turn the mangle, so pale and pasty were his looks. Dislike in the village was evenly divided between the Rector's wife and the Lady of the Manor. Rural scolds and fault-pickers blamed both ladies, one for cooping Edward up, and the other for letting Sir Julius loose. The run of village boy was terrified by Julius, who could flay any of them with his fists, but was hilariously content on a fine summer's day to keep them fielding cricket balls on the village green while he practised for the Eton Eleven. Cherryumpton soon realised that the Eton Eleven was the most important thing on earth, and that they ought to be infernally pleased that any one hailing from Cherryumpton should have been chosen to bat for Eton. To the village boys Edward was neither fun nor menace. From an early age he had met them in Sunday School and even accompanied them on parish treats, but his studious habits prevented friend or rival. Though he did not suspect it, he was a standing temptation to them. Every boy in Cherryumpton would have enjoyed burying his fist in his juicy white face or kicking his quarters if only for his dear mother's sake. He was the sort of boy that a lamb would butt at sight. Julius they feared and loved.

Every day Edward enjoyed three meals with his parents : breakfast, which was silent, as Mrs. Stornington was reserving her shouts for morning interviews with the servants ; lunch, at which the Canon's sonorous voice more or less held its own ; and dinner, which was Mrs. Stornington's shouting hour. Anything annoying or displeasing caused her to shout, but mostly any reference to or recollection of Lady Trywilliam.

The parish echoed to the dual fact that it contained two ladies who could shout: one because her deceased husband had been deaf, and the other because of an insane desire to vie, socially, parochially, and failing that, vociferously, with the Lady of the Manor.

‘Lady Trywilliam,’ she announced with suppressed fury, ‘has been giving orders to Mrs. Judbud again. It is beyond the pale of decency. Aren’t you ashamed to have orders given by a woman in your own Church, Edward?’ And the Canon bowed his head more through domestic timidity than clerical shame.

‘Well, what has she found wrong in the Church now?’ he asked. ‘Found wrong?’ shouted his wife, ‘she has no right to find anything wrong as long as you are the Rector.’

‘I am always amenable to suggestion or criticism and expostulation even,’ he replied in his best pulpiteering. ‘You’re not worthy of being a Canon,’ rose his lady’s crescendo, ‘if you let an old woman hang her old bric-à-brac in your Church.’

‘Lady Trywilliam is fond of placing innocuous pieces of ironwork and needlework in the Sanctuary,’ murmured the Canon. ‘How dare she?’ shouted his wife. ‘Did you not have to get permission from the Chancellor of the Diocese in the Court of Arches before you could put candlesticks on the altar table?’

‘True, true, but there can be no doctrinal significance in Lady Trywilliam’s gifts beyond expressing her gratitude to God,’ the Canon groaned lamely. There was a fierce hiss over the table—‘She has no gratitude. She thinks she owns the Manor and the Church and the rights of both. The next time she talks during service, if you’re a man you will stop dead and shame her before the whole congregation.’

The Canon fortified himself against any possible scene in Church by settling to the pudding. During a pause he took occasion to speak to Edward about his work. Every evening, too, he had to decide whether his son

should continue work in the study or read Dickens and Scott over the fire downstairs.

Edward was too thoughtful, too introspective, to be much affected by externals. He was indifferent to temperatures, and his guarded existence never gave his body the ardours of athletics or the chills of outdoor sport. He was weak but sound, a typical son of the clergy, with a clean, undeveloped body, and a quick, uninspired mind. He was the only son of a healthy, well-fed, unworried man, who had committed no excess in his whole life, and seemed in a fair way of avoiding the more subtle fatalities attached to success. If the Scylla and Charybdis of mankind are excess and success, the Canon steered clear of both.

The father having failed of success, his son was being primed and aimed by Mrs. Stornington in his place. The Canon's fame would lie in his paternity of Edward. If the Canon had done little else for his son, he had given him a quiescent and untainted body. Edward was the sole-begotten concentration of himself at his best years, and did credit to his father's sirehood. He was not really the weakling or dullard, as first shoots are liable to be, for there had been two previous promises of birth from Mrs. Stornington, who had shed each prospect prematurely for no particular reason except hysterical wrath with Lady Trywilliam. With some charity but no doubt a subconscious insistence on her position, her Ladyship had sent Julius's old swaddling clothes to the Rectory. The prostrate and furious Mrs. Stornington had preferred to miscarry rather than accept such ignominious charity. Each time the poor Canon had returned the baby clothes with a polite and discreet note to say that they were not needed for reasons which, though left obscure to unhappy worms like themselves, must be clearer to God. But when Edward was expected, he was careful to waylay and destroy the lethal garments before they reached the highly strung Mrs. Stornington.

Orderliness permeated the Canon. He ordered his household, his 'hall for hinds,' as he called the servants' room, as he ordered his words and books and roses and services. All was decent and in order. Edward often puzzled over books so suggestive as *Montgomery on the Deity*, or *Jones on the Trinity*, and wondered what was the divine opinion on Jones and Montgomery. His mother's favourite volume was Mrs. Trimmer's *Economy in Charity for Ladies*. The Canon had always been proper and never extraordinary. He was one of those blameless bards who periodically won the Seatonian Prize for religious verse. His chief addition to men's ways and means had been the invention of double windows to keep out the sound of nightingales.

The Canon's life had been orderly. He had not sowed as much as a grain of wild canary seed! His career could have been publicly investigated without disquieting the Churches. He had taken a First in Classics and then in Mathematics at Cambridge, for the old school could take their Degree from both sides of the fence. After a mild course of theology, during which he had written an excellent apology for St. Paul's weak grammar, he had taken Holy Orders and faced the only decision of his life, whether to remain a College Tutor or to take a Curacy in certain and joyous expectation of a fat College living. Fondness for the countryside and a vague afterwash of youth's wanderlust had nerved him to the latter. Once installed in the clerical world, loving relatives had quickly steered him into connubial dry-dock. The young Curate would never have dared advance a claim in what might be delicately called No Man's Land. But the third daughter of a highly religious Naval officer was induced to compromise herself with him at tea one afternoon, and the Reverend Edward Stornington, who had mistaken her conduct for symptoms of ptomaine poisoning and shown a zeal and sympathy he would not otherwise have dared, had been faced by consequences. The Naval officer had been sent for,

and after inspecting his daughter's temperamental condition had wrung the startled Curate's hand with fulsome congratulation and invited him to join in prayer. Before he knew where he was, the Reverend Edward Stornington was praying for Grace to be shed 'upon this young couple, whom Thou, O God, hast so manifestly and tenderly conjoined.' Even so, he had shied a little at the matchmaking of Providence, and required a sharp letter from the Naval officer urging him to practise the Sacraments which he preached, and adding that, though Holy Matrimony was not considered a Sacrament by the Church of England, the Baptism of Infants certainly was! Whereat he behaved like a gentleman and published his own banns!

Henceforth his ways were safe, though not as exalted as his wife had wished. She had wished not merely to cast his bread on the waters, which was as much as he ambitioned, but to take a metaphor from her father's profession and to thrust him like a torpedo at the floating prizes of life. But far from cutting a foaming path across the ecclesiastical ocean, he had shown no impulse to leave harbour. There had been a series of disappointments following on apparent chances. Every time that opportunity came for clerical promotion, whether it was preaching a show sermon or striking the keynote at a Church Congress, he missed fire. He preferred to be a buoy to a torpedo. So life practically had passed, but on the moral side she herself became a torpedo-net, sheltering father and son from even the arrows and slings of daily contact and skirmish. They lived in a sort of parish paradise, out of which Eve had frightened the serpent by her perpetual shouting.

The climax had come when she had urged her husband to apply for the Harmsworth Chair of Biblical Hygiene recently founded in one of the provincial Universities. In spite of strong letters from Lady Trywilliam to all and sundry members of the Harmsworth family, in the course of which her handwriting became quite indecipherable

and her reasons inconsequential; and in spite of recommendations from a Dean and two sanitary engineers, there was no response. He was passed over, and the Canonry came as a belated consolation prize. At the back of her heart Mrs. Stornington had begun to eye the Bishopric of Ely. The old Bishop was crumbling, and she attended the annual garden parties under the shadow of the mighty Cathedral to note an episcopal decrecence which coincided with the ripening of her hope.

Sunday after Sunday the two ladies eyed each other across the Church, Mrs. Stornington installed like the Rock of Ages in the chancel, while Lady Trywilliam defied time from the Trywilliam Chapel, regardless of the mortuary inscriptions which testified to the passing as well as to the piety of Trywilliams. 'They were worth reading from many points of view. The late Sir Julius was mourned as one 'leaving behind him both abundant and undoubted evidence of his interest in Christ, an inestimable source of consolation to his sorrowing relatives.' While his mother had been more modestly deplored as one 'whose religious principles were deep-seated but unobtrusive, and though she felt strongly, she was diffident in her profession, lest through the infirmity of human nature religion might be disgraced by an inconsistent walk.'

In view of Ely, it was important to keep on perfect terms with Lady Trywilliam, though unfortunately her politics were not those of the present Prime Minister, whom she seldom mentioned except in terms of genteel Billingsgate. But Mrs. Stornington used to dream of Ely Towers at night, and foresee the joy of snubbing Lady Trywilliam on the day of her husband's consecration. . . .

Meantime she was kept busy by parish work, parish ailments, parish jealousies and parish scandals. A singular one had occurred in the case of Veronica Judbud. It was almost unbelievable that anybody so closely allied

to the Church as the charwoman's niece could have been led away. Veronica had been attracted to a passing circus and had not appeared the next morning, which was Sunday. It was not till Wednesday that she was traced to Newmarket. She could only give as an excuse, that she had been tempted to run away and thought it was no harm as she had been so kindly treated. After severe cross-examination by Mrs. Judbud in Mrs. Stornington's presence, she was restored to Church membership but dismissed from the Band of Hope.

CHAPTER III

EDWARD AND JULIUS

MRS. STORNINGTON observed that headmasters of public schools often became bishops, and in the waiting interval she persuaded the Canon to take pupils. It advertised him to the nobility and kept him in a way of genial command whether of schoolboys or of curates. Son Edward used to meet the pupils at mealtime and watch them complete meagre hours of work with the Canon for the Cambridge 'Little Go' or the Army: rather infantile tests compared to the King's College Scholarship. Their pursuits and playtime had differed even more considerably, for they generally walked or rode into Cambridge and spent an hour playing billiards or drinking port wine in University taverns.

With only one pupil of his father's he became intimate, with Julius Trywilliam! During his last summer holiday from Eton the young Sir Julius was sent every morning from the Manor to be prepared for entrance into Trinity College. Sir Julius more than doubled the Canon's labours and nearly halved Edward's progress. He was roughly two years older and two years backward of Edward in study. His Eton career had been enormously successful, and he had risen high among football and cricket choices. He had once made a rattling forty runs against Harrow. Praised by his masters, admired by the villagers, adored by small boys, worshipped by friends, and spoilt by his mother, he went by easy ways from popularity to popularity. Even the Canon, who had no favourites among his pupils, alluded to him as *Divus Julius*.

There was something divine in his radiant glance and royal laugh as he leaped the Rectory wall and cheerily summoned the Rector to say what he could on behalf of Latin conditional sentences. The value of Latin had always seemed negative to Julius, and the abolition of Greek a serious omission from Magna Charta. But he would sit for an hour thumbing Virgil and listening to the Canon's comments with a bland and sceptical courtesy. The Canon would broach, summarise and impress Paley's antiquated arguments in favour of Christianity, which were an abiding staple of the 'Little Go.' Julius swallowed them politely, though it was beyond his imagination why in a University for gentlemen Christianity required bolstering any more than the Conservative Party or first-class cricket. They were all excellent and had come to stay. It was doubtful if Julius could pass either the 'Little Go' or the Trinity Entrance, though this latter had been specially devised not to impede the arrival of the newly rich or the anciently noble, whose combination makes Trinity the large and prosperous College it is.

For Julius everything was for the best, and it only remained to enjoy the best the world considerably offered him. Edward was no less appreciative of the standing bequests of Providence, but at the back of his mind was the growing hope that he would leave the world a little better than he found it. Julius never troubled himself with raising folks' happiness or virtue. His presence alone was good to share. His laughing entry always lifted the temperature of the Rectory. The whole village smartened when he was at home, and the stagnant pond of local gossip and uncharitableness suffered temporary drought.

Often did the good Canon and his wife discuss Julius's influence on their ewe lamb. Though he could not be considered a perfect example, still he enabled Son Edward to imbibe the rough and breezy atmosphere of the public school without leaving his home circle. He

fulfilled their practical desire to see their nestling learn to swim without positively entering the water. So Edward associated freely with Julius and sniffed the perils of school life from afar.

Julius never bullied or worried Edward. He looked upon him as a girl, more unfortunate than unattractive, who had been made to stay at home while other boys competed against a more and more pleasurable world. Julius kept his strength for use against the strong. Besides, Edward afforded him immense amusement. He was never tired of starting his coy amazement or surprised blushes by retailing Eton tales or the talk of the town.

Edward was too easily shocked. He took everything for wrong outside the long narrow path of work and exercise. He had lost almost whatever rudiment of self-assertion he had ever possessed. He had never directly disobeyed his father, except on an occasion due to a contradictory injunction given by his mother. His father had naturally both remitted the punishment and allowed his own direction to be reversed. As a matter of personal discipline, Edward always made a clean breast and a quiet soul for himself simultaneously. Thereby he succeeded in avoiding both penalty and remorse. They were always trivial cases. In one case he confessed eating the food which remained on the table after luncheon. His father gave him the benefit of the doubt, arguing that the food had been placed on the common table. If his son had felt hungry, there was the precedent of David, who had removed the shewbread from the altar for private consumption. During Lent he fell constantly foul of his boyish appetite and asked for punishment of the gluttonous man within. To ease his conscience, a system was devised whereby so much jam was returned to the larder every day and a penny placed to the standing account of Dr. Barnardo's Homes. On the other hand, if his appetite carried the day, one penny was deducted from the mouths of the unfortunate

children. And the gratified Canon would embalm the incident in an analogy from Lucretius, explaining how the *plenum* and *inane*, the *full* and the *void*, found their contrast and conflict in the folds of a boy's stomach as well as in the majestic machinery of the universe.

Edward had grown up sexless. He had never dreamed of applying the analogies of Natural History to himself. He lived in Melchizedekian ignorance, as though born without father or mother. Human beings he unconsciously felt were different from animals. He was unaware of his body, perhaps because he rose in the dark and washed himself before the light filled the bathroom. As he was never ill, he took no notice of the flesh. It served him like blotting paper or boots or the fresh air. In the summer he made use of his supple limbs by swimming and bathing. It was the only time he could share Julius's sport, and Julius never went for a swim without giving a cheery holla for Edward, who had standing permission to accompany his Achillean companion. Light and lithe, he found to his delight that his eel-like shape took him quicker through the water than Julius, who could only pound the spray with the clumsy strokes of a cricketer out of his element.

These were the most delicious minutes of a placid and bookish life. For the moment, he shook off the Lucretian theory running through his mind in ponderous hexameters, or the appalling syntax of the speeches in Thucydides, well-known and predestined nightmares to enable examiners to inflict the largest amount of pain on future examinees. Likewise the arabesques and echoing coronals of Pindar and the dry algebra-like lecture-notes of Aristotle slipped off Edward's fermented mind each evening that he dived between banks splotchy with king-cups and iris-flags into lucent green water and foamed its virginity before it passed into the oar-broken stretches of Cambridge and beyond. Julius looked magnificent in the sunlight with his neck and arms of a light coppery colour, while his length and strength of

limb showed no blemish save a few cricket bruises. Edward made a milk-white page running and skipping behind the brawny squire he served. He was perhaps not without blemish, for his parents had circumcised him in accordance with Biblical precept under the impression that they were dedicating their first born to the Lord.

Following maternal instructions, Edward always went to the river in bathing drawers. Julius was different. He was like one of the gods in the Greek History pictures, and it made no difference whether he walked naked into the water or not. Nudity had always seemed to Edward an obvious distinction between mortals and immortals, and it was impossible to think of his playfellow except as the *Divus Julius*. Edward would no more have discarded his dripping little loin-cloth than he would have kept on his cap while his father was preaching. He crept out of the evening waters as soon as he felt chilled, while no wellspring seemed cold enough to reduce Julius's ardour. Julius was a case where the public school was justified. It made no difference that he had been spoiled at home, for he had been disciplined into a discipliner himself. It made no difference that he had never been punished by parents, for the Eton birch had supplied the Seal of Solomon to his unchastised thighs. He had grown and increased in everything except in Grace and grammar. He never lacked pocket money, which flowed into the perquisites of healthy sport. He had never squandered money upon Regent Street or Leicester Square. His first week after leaving Eton he had been invited by a bevy of older friends, some at the Varsity, some at Sandhurst, and others real members of White's, to join in a sweep for Miss Millicent Spoon, a thoroughly sophisticated young lady of the Pantomimes, who had very good-naturedly allowed her charms to be staked at a guinea a head to two dozen very boyish admirers. Julius had paid his guinea and been a little relieved on missing the winning number.

His knowledge of nature had reached him from neither

a scientific nor theological source, just in the ordinary hail-fellow-what-a-joke way of the English public school. That institution of segregated boyhood during term time, the hearty holidays and the occasional acquaintance with girls as shy intersexually as himself, had made Julius the perfect gentleman. To his friends' sisters or the girls whom his mother invited to the Manor he would never have dreamed of proffering anything except bread and butter and perhaps a cricket yarn. Girls bored him to fatuity. On the other hand, he understood that a type of girl existed such as he and his friends sometimes picked up after a theatre in London, who accepted as stiff a drink as a cricket pro, and swore like Fifth-formers, and exchanged the sort of stories they were swished for telling at school. But he never went farther with them. Athletics always made him sleepy before midnight, and he had understood from his tutor that girls were seriously bad for training. He accepted them as a necessary and not very amusing side of life, which required rather more privacy than drinking, and generally a little more money than gambling. His betting bill was his only trouble in life. He left Eton one hundred pounds down to bookies.

Julius had felt the stress and strain of puberty as much as his keenness of body and health of mind permitted. He was vaguely satisfied by the adoration of his fags and hero-worshippers. Subconsciously their pink downless faces and blue baby eyes represented the other sex to him, and he allowed romance to colour his patronage. It flattered him to keep an album with the photograph of every pretty boy in the school. He was amused by their rivalries and jealousies, and enjoyed the obedient adoration which he enforced with a cane. He did not feel complete in the eyes of the school without a swarm of good-looking satellites, and instinctively he chose them for their good looks, not caring if there was another criterion. Boys who came under his influence became smarter in their dress and cleaner of

face and hands. They took themselves more seriously, and learnt that there was a code for gentlemen: that the first thing in life was to play games well and the second commandment was likewise. There was a third commandment to be good-looking. The fourth was to dress well. The fifth was to belong to White's. The sixth was never to use words of more than three syllables. The seventh was never to be over-friendly with cads, Liberal politicians, ushers, moneylenders or clever people generally. There were minor laws, rather involving etiquette than anything else. But such was the Eton Decalogue, and Julius lived by it.

Women hardly entered into this code of moral and social obligation. A fellow was bound to be polite and take his hat off to the women-folk of others. But never having had his path crossed by an emotional woman, there was an entire category of sensation unopened to Julius. He vaguely wondered whether he would have to fall in love some day to please his mother and as a matter of good form. Meantime his whole desire centred in athletics; in his own body rather than in the bodies of others. His lust for the time was to win a cricketing Blue at Cambridge.

For such as Julius Edward could only be a fag, a butt, a menial. But Julius was wonderfully kind to the docile and guileless youth, who believed and obeyed everything he said, and carried more of the Classics in the lobe of one ear than Julius's hulking brain. Julius usually withheld his ordinary oaths rather than give pain to Edward, who would be stung into stammering expostulations by the mildest reference to the Pit. Sometimes Julius could not help dropping a 'Damn' like a coloured fly in front of those fish-like lips for the fun of seeing them purse and rise. Toward the end of the vacation they were bathing together as usual.

'Lord! let's look at you,' said Julius, and snatched the towel from the blushing Edward. 'Give it me back,' he cried. 'Oh Julius! don't tease me. I've got such

a terrible amount of work to do for the next few weeks.' Julius laughed and gently flipped his white skin pink with the towel's edge. 'I won't hurt you. Why, you've got rather nice legs. Who would have thought it?' It was the last object that Edward could have felt worthy of Julius's admiration. Julius had such splendid hard-running specimens. What could he see in his white chicken limbs? Perhaps he was only making fun of him, for he went on, 'Edward, my boy, what a nice girl you would have made. You might have gone on the stage and worn tights. You would have been the scream of the town.' And he laughed till he could hardly stop himself.

Edward was deeply mortified and hurriedly pulled his flannels over his slim legs, which he despised as much as the antler-proud stag in the fable. Julius saw that he was hurt, and good-naturedly tried to repair the wrong. 'Sorry, Edward! But I really admire your legs. They are beautifully made. Just like the marble statue in the School Library. I believe that with a little training you could run like a hare. We can't all be pounding cart-horses. Legs are really important in life. You will always hear men or women judged by their legs. You see, all rowing and riding and running depends on legs, and dancing too, when it comes to girls.' Julius seemed quite serious in his philosophy of the fatted calf. Edward looked up. 'I remember something in the Psalms that God delighteth in no man's legs.' Julius laughed loud: 'Well, you are a mug. But there's no sport in the Bible, and who cares? It all means nothing, but parsons have to read something on Sundays.' Edward had never heard this precise theory of Scripture, though the Canon had conceded a cautious dip into the Higher Criticism. Edward subsided into his own deep knowledge. Julius was beyond instruction on any intellectual point. *Divus Julius!* Six foot, pure bronze, blue eyes and a heart full of selfishness and honour—a nice nut for the admiring women of England to crack.

Julius tested him another day on a point of knowledge of which Edward's mind was virgin, and was quite upset at the result. The Canon believed so deeply in the rigid sanctity of English life, that he never thought it necessary to warn his son of some of Nature's surprises for the adolescent. As a result, Julius drew the curious belief from Edward that his own birth was primarily due to God's wish to bless a model rectory. Julius probed again and again, but the most that Edward would confidentially admit was that God had mysteriously opened his mother's womb in the poetical sort of way that He opened the windows of Heaven. He himself had been discovered like an Easter egg. His father's sole share in this joyful discovery had been apparently limited to christening what was afterwards registered and regarded as his son. Julius felt more pity than humour, and then a queer sense of awe, as though Edward was one of those beings who are too good or silly to live.

Somehow he felt that it was his duty to explain then and there and not laugh, though Heaven knew it was a laughing matter! He pulled Edward down on the bank beside him, and gave him a brief but perhaps rough summary of the more probable share the worthy Canon had taken in his procreation. Listening as long as he could bear it, with streaming eyes Edward suddenly stuffed fingers into his ears and darted home as fast as he could.

Ashamed to show his tears to his parents, and no less ashamed for their own sakes, Edward remained for an hour in the tangle of hemlock at the bottom of the garden, crying convulsively, until he heard his mother shout, 'Edward dear, your father has taken his Lucretius up to the study.' Instinctively he rose and entered for the evening task.

CHAPTER IV

LUCRETIOUS AND VERONICA

THE late Sir Julius Trywilliam had been accustomed to spend the London season in great political and social pomp. He had possessed the majestic mansion long known as Trywilliam House at the bottom of Stratford Place, that curious blind alley, which runs off Oxford Street between guardian poodle lions and faces the astonished tourists with the finest pediment surmounting the finest Adam's house left in London. Stratford Place was considered a quiet backwater within easy stroll of Berkeley Square and the Clubs. The Trywilliams had originally lived in Berkeley Square, but the arrival of the first Jewess heiress sent them across Oxford Street. 'I like going to Church,' Lady Trywilliam had said, 'without seeing the noses that were turned up at our dear Lord.'

For a quarter of a century Lady Trywilliam had entertained for Church and State in that gaunt mansion. She had seen Prime Ministers and Bishops as in Jacob's vision, ascending and descending the huge stairs which filled almost the whole interior, leaving scant space for the long bedraggled drawing-rooms and squalid stone bedrooms. There was an imposing entrance-hall, presided over by a full-size plaster Venus of Milo and decorated by a huge stuffed porter's chair shaped like the sawn top of a liner's air-funnel. There was a fine dining-room, in which flashed valuable Caroline plate and good wines bubbled, when the late Sir Julius had given otherwise unsparkling entertainment to the Conservative Party. Since his death the House had been shorn

of splendour. Only one powdered flunkey slumbered in the porter's chair waiting for the occasional guests fitting to Lady Trywilliam's widowhood. They were for the most part political phantoms, unhappy Archdeacons or such social spectres as had the misery of being hopelessly snobbish and at the same time hopelessly unfashionable. Lady Trywilliam was the self-elected President of the Anti-Bore Society, and remorselessly she discharged guests whom she could neither use nor amuse. She was called 'the Boa-Constrictor.'

In those days Trywilliam House kept its airy contour, but the single story on each side has since been blocked with disproportionate wings. All Oxford Street has been tightened owing to the monstrous pylonic colonnades of Selfridge's. Shop after shop has had to swell or be supplanted. Trywilliam House in consequence has not been allowed elbow-room, and the atmosphere of leisured serenity and refined gentility has disappeared into the nightmare scream of Oxford Street for ever.

Lady Trywilliam had returned to town after paying one of her short visits to the Rectory. Very formal and ungushing were those entries into the clerical circle, for she always felt on much more cordial and chatty terms with the Almighty than with His meekest deputies.

'I am returning to London,' she announced. 'I find Cambridge intolerably overrun with underbred people at this time of year. But I wish you to supervise dear Julius during the rest of his holidays.' The Canon bowed, and arched hands profuse with perspiration and rose-pollen.

Mrs. Stornington's idea was a *quid pro quo*, and as quick as lightning she flashed, 'You will hardly find the poor dear Bishop when you return. We all fear it is his last summer.'

Lady Trywilliam's face gleamed. She had her own besetting virtues and secretly enjoyed Mrs. Storning-

ton's anxiety. It placed her so utterly in her hands. 'Yes, yes, it will be very sad, but it is bound to come, as we used to say for twenty years about the dear good Queen. I shall see Ministers of the Crown in London, and if I hear any rumour of an empty Bishopric I will let you know. Of course you will be discreet. But I always think the Canon's love of roses would fit him to be a Dean. Good-bye, Mrs. Kensington Common—I mean Stornoway—oh, what have I said? Forgive me!'

Mrs. Stornington's face lit with hidden fury. 'I am sure you will let us know in good time, and—and—if you could ever say a good word for the Canon. You know it has been a terrible disappointment for him to miss the Chair of Biblical Hygiene.'

'Say no more, I pray you,' said her Ladyship with gratified benevolence. 'I have always thought of the Canon in connection with the Primacy. Indeed, the last time I met the dear good Duke of Cambridge I flatly told him so.'

The Storningtons almost passed under the sofa in their spasms of loyal pleasure. In return her Ladyship wished Julius to be carefully grounded in all the knowledge and conduct befitting a gentleman. Mrs. Stornington more than promised for her husband's part. 'We feel it is so good for Edward to meet a young gentleman of the world.'

That evening her Ladyship returned to town after acquainting her town coachman, the *Morning Post*, and the Dean of the Chapels Royal of her movements.

Upstairs Edward laboured unceasingly. He had touched a passage of great splendour in Lucretius, a rift of gold in the heavy-hammered metamorphic rocks of the *De Rerum Natura*. Something quickened within him, and with pencil he marked and translated lines for his own secret pleasure. Ponderous at first, but passing into power and pathos, the lines struck the strange pagan note that death destroys all, the evil with the

good, and that fear, desire, ambition cannot scourge the dead.

*Jam jam non domus accipiet te laeta, neque uxor
Optima nec dulces occurrent oscula nati
Praeripere et tacita pectus dulcedine tangent.
Non poteris factis florentibus esse, tuisque
Praesidium: misero misere aiunt omnia ademit
Una dies infesta tibi tot praemia vitae, etc.*

Edward had realised the futility of trying to turn Lucretius into rhyming or blank verse, still less into the curious schoolboy journalese which is served in examination-rooms. He had the idea of throwing it into the style of the Authorised Version, which constant reading had caused to sink and soak through the pores of his mind.

Lucretius was the first arrangement of words and letters which Edward had recognised as literature. Oh, the desolating splendour and sinking consolation of that Latin pessimist! Edward had mastered him sufficiently to turn to him as a musician to a familiar score. Never did Lucretius fail the mood of his heart. Sad but satisfying were the silences left by the cadenced reading.

Edward scribbled a version of the passage:—

‘Soon shall the house of thy joy receive thee no more,
and thy wife and thy children shall not run to meet thy
love. They shall not touch thy heart in silence unto
sweetness.

‘Thou shalt flourish no more in thy ways nor be
warden of thine own possessions.

‘Then shall they say of thee, Misery, oh misery! for
one unhallowed day hath taken the rewards of living
from thee.

‘But they shall add thereto, saying that thy desire
hath perished.

‘For if men but perceived in their mind and followed
rightly of speech,

‘Then would they release their soul from sorrow and
deliver their heart from fear.

‘For when thou art sunken unto death, thou shalt die for ever, and neither grief nor bitterness shall touch thee.’

It was a passage he had first read that evening when he had run away weeping from the river in distress at the revelation Julius had made of sex.

It was an evening, moreover, which had furnished Julius with far more exciting experience. When Edward slipped away, he sat on the bank half sorry that his words had wounded the delicate-minded boy. Still, it was better that he should find out things before he entered the University, which Julius imagined rougher than the school world he knew.

Girding his lively loins with a towel, Julius had lain back and laughed a little. He felt so monstrously fit. The hot evening sun was dipping behind the gilded willows and playing like a warm douche over his finely cut shoulders. The ivory blades tightened the lustrous skin across his spinal stalk, while his handsome face rested upon two very wide wicket-keeping hands, and a pair of graceful ankles dangled in the air lazily above his well-grooved hips. The rank grass showed more shapely and the coloured herbs more brightly against the whiteness of his body. *Divus Julius!*

Half dozing under the glow of his bathe, Julius thought he heard rustling in the grass. It drew closer. He never troubled to turn his head. There were no big snakes in England. It might be Edward feeling less modest. Again the grass moved behind him, and he felt the languorous sensation of approach. Something had even touched his ankles very gently. Julius turned over on his side like a basking shark. . . . It was Veronica! Veronica, with whom he had not played for years, not since she was sent to the Manor to amuse his childhood. She was crouching in the long grass, and as his eyes flashed amazement and laughter, she sank forward and threw her arms round his knees and let her face sink on the fragrant ground. ‘Veronica! what in Heaven is the matter with you?’

‘Forgive me, Sir Julius, I am so unhappy. I am going to run away, and thought I would like to look at you again. I thought you were asleep.’

‘Not with the circus again, I hope,’ and he laughed good-naturedly. ‘We heard you went to be trained to jump through hoops. What would Mrs. Judbud have said?’ ‘What didn’t the Canon say when he turned me out of the Band of Hope?’

Veronica was laughing through her tears. Julius caught the liquid gleam and contrast of her small white teeth and violet eyes. Liking her in that moment, he raised her from the grass and said, ‘Look here, when can we talk? Wait till I get on my clothes.’ She sat like a bewitched creature of the stream, watching and watching him. He sat himself beside her. ‘Did you drop here by accident?’ ‘No, I came to see you bathe!’ ‘Damn your cheek!’ laughed Julius. ‘What gave you that idea?’ ‘Oh, I have often seen you swimming and drying. I watch when you pass our cottage with Master Edward, and then run round by the mill and lie in the grass. I think you beautiful.’ It was so naïve and simple that Julius flushed at the compliment. He had enjoyed flouting his bodily strength in the eyes of other boys. He was near enough to see the sheen of his body reflected in her eyes. He felt curiously pleased, almost delighted to find how well his physique looked in that velvet mirror. He had forgotten that Veronica had grown up, and was ten years older than in the days when they played together. He let her sit on his knee, wondering whether she was a child or a woman, an old playmate or some kind of new toy. . . .

The initiative remained hers. She knew that socially she was not his class, that she had little beauty to attract him and no talent to amuse him. But since her adventure with the circus she knew that she was a woman. She was not sure whether he was a man. There was the chance that she could offer him the fruit that Eve had offered the delighted Adam. All the woman,

all the blood, all the youth danced in her as they danced in Eden. She felt her heart brimming with her first love and with all the adoration which a girl adds to sacrifice. Poor child ! she could not stop to think what the Canon would think or what Mrs. Judbud would say. She only knew that she loved Julius and that at last he condescended to speak and listen to her. She could not distinguish in that bewildering hour between the Creator of Nature and the Supernatural Ecclesiast. Timid, but modest at heart, she felt she was no longer her own. In a man's country, women with more wishes than chances for love are tempted to take risks.

Nevertheless Veronica felt that she ran no risk under Julius' chivalrous attention. She was content with the contentment of a flower in the sun-speckled wind when she felt his fingers stroke her hair, soaped only that morning with the same 'Monkey Brand' soap devoted by Mrs. Judbud to scrubbing the brass Crusader. The lull of evening had hushed itself, and the pollarded willows lifted their pale green brushwork against the pink spaces of sunset. The sinking globe had thesaurised his light into golden ingots of cloud and was slowly abandoning the horizons to a mistiness of pale hortensia. Everything seemed quelled and queered around them.

Veronica and Julius reclined as friends outside the tedium of conventional daylight. She spaced little silences with her chatter. He listened languorously. Their meeting was as casual as the meeting of wind and grass. Julius, hugging his flannelled knees, let his attention run to curiosity and then to awe. She told her tale so simply, so pitifully, the tale of every country maid who has parted with her maidenhood. Julius felt anger run through his honest heart. Selfish, casual, and sport-centred as he was, he could not bear to think that any daughter of England could have been treated like Veronica. The sense of feudal protector underswept his rage. Veronica belonged, with her cottage and Mrs. Judbud, to him. He was the Squire, and by Heaven he

would make somebody pay for this ! Englishmen may lack the graces of Latin lovers, but they sometimes allow a sense of fairplay to drift from the arena of sport into that relentless and remorseless duel set between woman and man. Julius felt wrung to generous fury. Never had the dead Crusader in the village church clenched his fingers with such mystical zeal to slay the profaner of the Holy Place.

Youth is more curious than cruel. Julius could only mutter 'Oh, the damned scoundrel, the damned scoundrel !' He was still a boy and he opened his heart with pity. Veronica, being woman, walked in with sudden joy. She had told her shame and she buried her face on his cricketing blazer with as much pleasure as she had ever felt in her life. Julius sat a little petrified and began to stroke and soothe her as he would a trembling pony which had been caught and cut in barbed wire. At the same time he wondered what he could really do to help her. He could give orders for Mrs. Judbud's cottage to be repaired. He could talk to the Canon about reinstating Veronica in the Band of Hope. However, the minute called for fine action and he suddenly kissed her lips square. They moved like the fronds of a sensitive plant.

The wine-coloured night had fallen like a curtain and the warm dew seemed to rise like the sweat of tired earth. Veronica let her face rest upon his shoulder like a pillow. Her breath moved upon his cheek like the scent of some delicate burnt-offering. Around them ranged the long and sympathetic grass.

Above the boy and girl, stars of horoscope pricked the iron-blue sphere. Out of the eternal spaces planets condescended to tide or train or turn the ephemerality of men. Impassible themselves, the heavens made all things pass. The motives and counter-motives of insectival beings seemed scarcely to count in the terrible balances, which weighed Orion or scaled the gravity of Venus. Stellar fate was strong to overpower human

forbidances. All-casual are the attractions shed by the causal stars. Hanging in the pit of space, the unconsulted habitants of an unseen and even nameless little planet toss the apple of allegory to each other, man to woman and woman to man. Is there a permissive Providence, which seeds each man-child planted into the world, and marks pitifully the fall not only of sparrows but of girl-children destined to be the source of the others' sorest sorrow and quickest delight? Does all lie upon the unfathomable light of unimagined universes, and do the universes themselves like motes within ray return the æonic beam?

Does Love the unfathomable rise like ancestral dew out of the rich and trillion-corpsed earth, or does it descend from the accumulating light of the eternities? Is the very lucidity of space the myriad dust of all things loving and beloved left retrospectively lucent beyond the spaces of the stars and the seasons of time? Had Destiny, the pitiless one, pity upon Julius and Veronica upon the bank-side that the torrent of time seemed to them to be stayed and the long grass to disappear and the pollarded willows and the curling stream? . . .

CHAPTER V

THE SCHOLARSHIP

THE time approached for Edward's Cambridge Scholarship. The Canon had trained him to the limit of memory-power. Edward sat up late at nights, sometimes with a wet towel round his head, laying layer after layer of dissected and desiccated classical texts in his mind. All originality and elasticity was steadily stewed out of the grey matter of his brain. It was the first step on the ladder to becoming a Cambridge Don.

In the last weeks he mastered the Poetics of Aristotle, that æsthetic grind on which all literary criticism is based, the telegraphic Annals of Tacitus and three iridescent Dialogues of Plato. He jumped into all the difficult authors and escalated their idioms without sensing their style. The requirements of English examiners are peculiar. He worked up his mechanical power of composition by translating Hymns Ancient and Modern one a day into Latin elegiacs, the poorest English poetry into sham Latin. It was an addled brain that the Canon drove into Cambridge every day of the examination in the village cab. Edward carried lunch in one pocket and notes preparatory to the afternoon paper in the other. As he left the quiet Rectory for unknown arenas, Edward felt a chill at heart as though unequal to contests or competition. His head was thumping as in nightmare. He felt he could not do justice to his father's careful preparations. Catching sight of Mrs. Judbud and Veronica as he passed their cottage was a relief to his mind. He waved a pitiful farewell and Mrs. Judbud curtsied. His own anxiety seemed reflected in

the sad little face of Veronica. Why should she be sad? She had no examinations to face. He felt a desire to live in a cottage instead of a College for the rest of his life.

The cab slowly progressed through summer-clad lanes and fields, crossed with furrows of young wheat and dotted by ascensional larks. Across the Gog-Magog hills they struck the Trumpington Road, a long, winding two miles of elm-sheltered approach. Edward peeped and beheld an old milestone marked with heraldry. 'We are a mile from Great St. Mary's,' murmured the Canon. The road wended between the Leys School and Victorian houses, which combined Christian comfort with the flattest taste. Edward mistook a gaunt hospital for a minor College. His father sniffed: 'Edward, you might as well take a sexton for a minor Canon.' 'You have never shown me Cambridge before,' said Edward. The strain evidently affected both. A monstrous Greek temple like a suburban Parthenon with sea-sick lions protruded on the left. 'The Fitzwilliam Museum,' intoned the Canon, and as the first College appeared beyond, 'Peterhouse! And never condescend to speak of it as Pothouse, my son.' Edward made mental promise. 'On our right, Pembroke, and further on our left, behind those elms, St. Catherine's. King's follows. We used to be vulgar enough to say that though a cat might look at a king, Kings looked down on Cats. In fact, a Provost of King's founded St. Catherine's for our regal amusement. But I like King James's sapience, advising his subjects to pray at King's, eat at Trinity, and study and sleep at Jesus. That is where you will pray, my son. But here we are!'

Edward's eyes passed the Bull Hotel and fastened dully on a building of Victorian Gothic, from which shot a long fantastic screen of stonework clamped in the distance to an enormous mediæval pinnacled storm-breaker. 'King's College Chapel,' intoned the Canon,

and his son's heart sank as though he were hearing the Commination service and every curse were being piled on his head. Numb with bodily stiffness and mental terror, Edward crawled out of the cab. They passed through a pretentious entrance that bore some resemblance to the grotesque Pavilion at Brighton, and more to a magnum of brandy flanked by four soda-water bottles. Edward felt impressed and depressed as he crossed the sacred cobblestones into King's for the first time.

He did not notice the beautiful swallow-nested groining above his head, or the statue of the holy Founder above the noiseless fountain in the green pleached sward. He felt too tired to wonder at the buttressed cliff of the Chapel, which entirely covered one side of the great Court, like some hulk of colossal masonry, or the ground-story of Babel left over by the mighty builders of another age. His blurred eyes scarcely reached the long Georgian building opposite, through which an open arch had been cleft about sufficient for a full-sized elephant and palanquin to pass without touching. He was only aware of some twenty other candidates for scholarship, each laden no doubt with a father's hopes, a mother's fears or some pedagogue's reputation. Poor boys, spring and summer had meant little to them that year. They all showed visible signs of erudite indigestion. Their young eyes seemed glazed by oil and candle light. Most of them wore spectacles on their flaccid faces. Professorial spawn and tutorial tadpoles! thought Edward, feeling himself like a Strasbourg goose puffed and packed with surfeit of cram. He could feel the layers of Tacitus and Aristotle in his mind. Breakfast still stuck as indigestibly inside as his last gobble of Greek roots.

Only one or two boys showed the indomitable spring of youth and sign of athleticism. Cram of mind, muscle of the body are the two gifts which the Public School offers without achieving the Grecian blend between

appreciative mind and beautiful limb. Edward parted from his father without a word, and was led with the rest by a stern College Porter into a lecture-room called for geographical or historical reasons unknown the Chetwynd. To the eye a College Porter is a well-dressed Don. A Translation paper was proffered to Edward, who for some minutes mistook the Greek characters for notes of music. They were *gammas* and *alphas* and *omegas* all right, but they seemed to move about on the paper to the slow-beating rhythms in his brain. The silver clangour of the College clock ringing the quarter sent an electric thrill through him. He pulled himself together and dissected one of Herodotus' yarns, in which that primitive reporter mightily pulled the legs of the gods and mankind. He tried a coloured patch from Pindar, but he got the gold and the horses and chariots mixed. Aristotle dished him. He sailed into Sophocles, knowing the crib almost by heart. He had not finished at the lunch interval.

Latin verse composition came easier. He unloaded a cargo of very unpoetic hexameters to match the cadences of a set piece of Tennyson. . . . He was tired, too tired to talk in the cab going home. He had never felt his brain move so wearily before. And the second day was similar. The Latin Prose left a kink instead of a kick in his mind. And Latin Translation tied him up in knots and bundles, though he ground out Ovid, Juvenal, Tacitus. The climax was a letter in which Cicero used Greek words when Latin failed him. The clever thing, of course, would have been to supply French phrases for the Greek. Edward could barely think of the English. It was an unexpected phase of examinational torture. Lastly, General Questions. He was asked to discuss such sentences as : *Natura non facit saltum*.

No jumps in Nature ! He poured out some Lucretian evidence, and ended up with a joke to the effect that ' Jump to Glory Jane ! in Meredith might hold good in

the processes of theology, but not of Nature.' He thought it rather smart, and hoped it would appeal to the irreligious temper his father attributed to King's Dons. He learnt afterwards that it had been corrected by the chaplain, who only thought it silly. There were two other propositions :—

'Death was invented by Natural Selection'

'Be good, sweet maid, and let who will, be clever.'

Edward wondered exactly what sort of mind they wanted at King's. 'Be good, sweet maid!' He could only think of Veronica.

It was not till the English Essay that he really came to grief. There was the usual choice of stock subjects : the Peloponnesian War, the unsettled merits of Fox and Burke and the unsettling differences between Realism and Nominalism. Edward's head became a little soft. He began writing about the rights and wrongs of a war which was only fought in order to give Thucydides the material out of which to perfect his style. . . . Half an hour more, and he found he had written a diatribe by Burke against Sparta ! It was all dreadfully mixed, and he was falling asleep. He was going under water. How his head sang ! . . . He awoke and noticed that his saliva was touching the floor, and that a gowned figure stood behind him.

'I am afraid you are not feeling well. I cannot leave the examination-room, but the Porter has gone to fetch a doctor,' said the young Don in charge of the examination-room. Edward looked wearily into a face in which reverence had long been stifled by cleverness, the face of one who had sacrificed sentiment to sense. Edward felt too blottesque to answer. He found himself removed by the unemotional Porter, and driven to a doctor. He was still all-of-a-slobber, and felt a greater fool even than at the moment when he set foot in the College. The doctor lived in a state of cheerful agility under the shadow of Great St. Mary's. He received

Edward with tremendous enthusiasm as though carried from a prize-fight. He was what was technically known as a 'rowing' doctor, and thumped men's lungs and hearts to see if they could stand the strain of the river. He was an adroit lancer of boils and patcher of galled thighs. He took the cheery line with Edward.

'Broke down over the books, eh? About time too. What, no exercise since Christmas? You had better run round the front court every morning . . . and I should recommend the boy to row.' This was spoken to the Canon, who had hurried to the scene with that look of felicitous inanity with which the clergy greet material or spiritual disasters. 'I say, make the boy row when he comes up. He's like a lump of wool and putty,' and the genial doctor completed his diagnosis by a series of thumps and pokes, which enabled him to decide unerringly that Edward was suffering from 'fug.' By way of unfugging him he poured a stiff brandy-and-soda.

Edward's previous experience of alcohol had been limited to untransubstantiated altar wine and brandy butter at the Manor for Christmas. The doctor's remedy threw him into snoring stupor, during which he was led to the cab and driven home. Mrs. Stornington had been made aware by telegram that all was not well, and stood in the Rectory door with a bottle of strong cowslip wine, and a look of real disappointment. This was the return of the torpedo she had launched upon the world: design, Edward Stornington the Second!—result, collapse. But a mother is a mother, and she shouted remedies.

Edward was packed to bed in the daylight, and the village doctor decided next morning that he had brain fever. Mrs. Stornington said, 'A fig for brain fever,' but the Canon read the Visitation of the Sick that evening at Edward's bedside. Lady Trywilliam, duly informed and duly bountiful, ordered grapes to be sent

from the Manor. 'It should be comforting to know that the dear boy has a brain at all. I wish dear Julius was capable of brain fever,' she wrote to the Canon.

It was decided that Edward must rest until October term time. Meanwhile he was returned to his old nurse Jeanne for treatment. It was returning to childhood. At first he worried a good deal not to work. Then he minded less, and finally not at all. He dreamed of coloured water continually pouring through his head from one ear into the other, and large yellow clouds with bright purple linings like vanishing mushrooms. He could sometimes see Greek sentences hanging across the room on laundry lines, and the letters becoming disconnected with each other and tumbling down, swaying *epsilons*, trembling *gammas* and collapsing *sigmas* . . . but Jeanne was always there, her dark pointed profile against the blinds, patiently watching him as when he was a child. The room was kept in twilight, and Edward lay wondering what bird Jeanne resembled. Too domestic for a hawk, too accipitrine for a hen, yet what bird was she like? Edward could not imagine. His mind would not wind up. It was like a watch that would not tick or strike. It was just like broken clock-work. Jeanne took wonderful care of him, always at his pillow soothing his brow or smoothing the sheets. When he felt thirsty, there was always a warm drink in her hand. But she would not answer when he spoke, but when he turned over to sleep she would sing, as she used to sing to him as a baby, snatches of the songs of Old France,

‘*Sur le pont d’Avignon,
sur le pont d’Avignon,*’

until he imagined a bridge over a blue river very far away, and people dancing in sabots. Oh no! they were only those Greek letters jiggling in the air!

And when she sang his favourite ‘*Au clair de la lune,*’ tears would mount and stick his eyelids together, and

perhaps he would not wake up for another hour. His parents passed through the room but on tiptoe, and never uttered a word. Sometimes, however, he could hear his mother faintly shouting in the distances.

Jeanne carried Edward back to his childhood. Though his mind would not work forward, it unwound its past like streak lightning, and he recovered emotions which had been overlaid by studies. He remembered his first form of fear, his curious terror of sunstroke. Jeanne had once told him that if he ran in the sun without his sailor-hat he would die. He had done so, and remembered Jeanne's warning too late. He had lain awake expecting the stroke, certain by God's just decree to die. Beaded with sweat, he had prayed that he might not die, and God had answered! . . . Then he remembered a firework display, and his conviction that it was caused by the angels. . . . Veronica had said so. . . . On Mrs. Judbud's authority. . . . He saw himself playing 'church' with Julius and Veronica as children, and preaching to her out of an old ash-stump. . . . He had loved her, and in his imagination used to invent and rehearse complicated ways of winning her. His favourite way was to go abroad and become a Prince—in San Marino for choice, whence he could return disguised as a beggar and wait outside Cherryumpton Church until Veronica passed; then he could drop his Bible for her to pick up politely, while less attractive members of the congregation walked by like the Levite in the parable. The ruse would always succeed, and Veronica fall into his princely and wealthy arms!

As soon as they reached school age they found themselves separated into social sheep and goat. But Veronica haunted the unconscious scenery at the back of Edward's mind, and whenever he dreamed of girls, her pale face would rush upon him. He used to have a curious recurrent dream of wars waged between boys and girls, a sort of Red Indian feud between the sexes, and he would enjoy being captured by girls and cruelly

treated, made to walk barefoot over flints or to carry a girl on his shoulders. It was generally Veronica, and he would be stricken with love for her and pathos for himself. . . . It all came back to him as he lay in bed, and he remembered catching her odour at a school feast, like the smell of ripe apples that have lain in a chandler's store. . . . He could remember all the smells of his life, for he had a wonderful olfactory sense. He always fixed people by smell, artificial or natural. His father, for instance, smelt of lexicon and roseleaf mixed, his mother of camphor and pickles, Lady Trywilliam of the peppermints she sucked listening to the sermon or routing bores. All the funny scents of boyhood returned to him. Mrs. Judbud smelt of soaped coffins—at least that was the only way he could place her. It used to give him a comfortable feeling all over snuffing Veronica . . . like a wholesome red apple.

He remembered his first consciousness of God and blind trust in prayer, how he once prayed at a venture for the conversion of China, and within a week heard with stupefaction that the sister of the schoolmaster had volunteered for the Chinese Mission. He wondered whether his prayers would affect his Scholarship at King's, or whether he would be able to pray Julius through the First Part of the 'Little Go.' His whole life at the Rectory ran through the countless sieve-pricks of memory. One by one he could recall the few routine-breaking incidents, even characteristics of the peripatetic Curates and Vicars, who exchanged pulpits on Fridays in Lent, and the seriousness with which he had always tried to look on each as a possible prophet, desiring thereby to shape his life. They had always proved lifeless to hear and deadly to meet, yet valiantly he held that the clergyman's was the greatest and best of professions. 'It is more than a profession,' his father used to say, 'for laity are professors of the Faith. Ours is a vocation, and pray God you may find it your voca-

tion.' Duly Edward prayed to be a clergyman, but not quite the same as all these missionaries. He recalled a lifetime of them, goat's-bearded or shaven shepherds, wizened old wiseacres or smart young Lancelots and Egberts from the Theological College, with a few high and dry Cathedral Canons. Perhaps he was committing sin in thinking of them so disrespectfully, the sin of mocking the prophets. Several weeks passed. . . . He became set in his religious bent.

When he was allowed to come down and read Dickens, Edward noticed new looks on his parents' faces, a pious pity on his father's, and something like dried disappointment on his mother's. But they were kinder than before, and he felt that he must be one of the spoilt children in this world. They never referred to his collapse, and when he inquired the result of the examination, he learnt that his papers had been good as far as they went, but unfinished. So his father told him in the gentlest and saddest of voices. He had been excused the Entrance Examination, and would be allowed rooms in College that October. But he had failed of a Scholarship.

He had been ploughed ! He sank back gulping picric tears. When he tried to bring his sorrow into the sweep of maternal understanding, his mother was inclined to shout hysterically. He ran upstairs and buried his head in Jeanne's apron. She crooned a little French song to him, and life began to beat again. He was always ill at ease if the morning had not been spent among books, and the Canon allowed him his Lucretius. In it he found a kind of secondary key to life. Here was the physical universe laid out in sonorous hexameters with the poet's weird previsions of modern science, hinting at the survival of the fittest, the working of atoms and the evolution of man from primitive conditions. After all, the atomic theory might be right, and Providence a figment of the brain. And the great pathos and beauty of the passages, in which Lucretius freed the human

intellect from terror of the gods and fears of the after life, reacted on Edward, freeing him from worry and fear of what examiners might ever do to him. One thing puzzled him a little. Why should a poet who made such sharp work of the existence of Deity salute Venus and her works, making her mistress of gods and men? Could it be that even the thinker and the atheist, even the philosopher, could not rid himself of the Cytherian Goddess?

Breakdown and failure did not discourage Edward, but it stirred pathetic bubbling in the compartment of his imagination devoted to self-contemplation. Before he went into residence at Cambridge he slipped his last Will and Testament between the leaves of his Bible, where vaguely he hoped it would be found by his executors following premature decease. He found and burnt it himself a year later. It was certainly premature:—

‘In the Name of the Blessed and Indivisible Trinity—Amen.

‘This is the last Will and Testament of Edward Cyprian Stornington, son of the Reverend Canon Stornington, Rector of Cherryumpton in the Diocese of Ely and County of Cambridge, layman of the Church of England, and an undergraduate at King’s College, in the University of Cambridge.

‘I desire to die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church according to the reformed articles in which I was brought up by my beloved parents, and I desire my body to be buried in the graveyard of Cherryumpton according to the rites of the Establishment. I wish to be buried without coffin or headstone, the expenses of my funeral to be paid out of my account at the Post Office Savings Bank, and the money that would have been otherwise spent on coffin and headstone to be divided amongst the poor of the parish.

‘I devise and bequeath my books to my dear father, my love and my watch to my dear mother, and my

microscope to Sir Julius Trywilliam, second Baronet of the name. To my dear nurse Jeanne I leave the gold links my godmother, Lady Trywilliam, gave me, and my Bible I leave to Miss Veronica Judbud, spinster of this parish.

‘EDWARD STORNINGTON.’

CHAPTER VI

KING'S !

ON an Eleventh of October Edward found himself once more approaching Cambridge by the slow and unimpeachable process of the village cab. Undergraduates were arriving by train and motor. Once a strange machine shot past, the first motor-bicycle seen in the street that winds through the University town. Edward withdrew his head a little dizzily. . . . He had taken life very easily during the past month. He intended to work all the harder in College. His well-pencilled Lucretius was in his pocket. He grasped it for confidence. It was the one Classic he knew by heart. He might become a great Lucretian scholar one day. And his mind flitted pleasantly ahead. He had marked several possible prizes in his *Student's Guide*. He might easily take one by concentration, and if he took Honours perhaps they would be glad to have him as a Scholar of the College after all. . . . And then he might try for a Fellowship, and Holy Orders would be an excuse for learning Hebrew. He would be learning something his father had never essayed. His dear father had given him a gold sovereign, which he felt in his pocket, like Midas.

The minutes passed as pleasantly as the twilight scenery. A sweet thrill began to penetrate his expectancy. It was almost dark, and casual street lamps began to stud the dusky shirt of evening. Lesser lights gleamed behind blinds, and Edward imagined the stored and concentrated knowledge of Trumpington Street, the retired professors, mathematical coaches, all the learned

lichen that collects round a University. What a town ! Any man in the street was probably an expert, and a woman walking out of a shop might be a future Wrangler !

Ungainly forms of Cambridge cads rather spoilt the illusion, but the sudden sight of undergraduates in gowns made his heart beat. To-morrow evening he would be gowned himself ! It was a long way from the solitary night roads at Cherryumpton. The white owl was forgotten. At the gate of King's his cab stopped. Porters emerged and wheeled his luggage within. A modest glow of satisfaction settled his mind. He no longer felt nervous. He was a man at last. The adroit familiarity of the porters assured him. Their noise and gesture impressed and impounded him into the great Regalian society of Kingsmen living and dead. Boyhood was over.

The Gates opened and shut. Edward felt as though he had pricked an immense bivalve in search of the pearls of life. The dusk covered him and his belongings, while the porters turned their attention to other adventurers of the mind. The Head Porter indicated the staircase where Edward would find the Tutor of the College, Mr. MacKennon. Edward ascended the cold stone stairs of learning and knocked at the double doors of Truth. A voice chirruped within, and he found himself faced by a tall, very good-looking gentleman, who seemed agreeably pleased and slightly amused by Edward's arrival. Mr. MacKennon had a curious laughless laugh with which he carried on conversation. 'Yes, yes ! You have come to King's ? quite right by the way ! quite right !'

Edward attempted some apology for the examination fiasco. 'Yes—yes,' said the Tutor, dropping his syllables as fast as pattering rain. 'Yes—yes, it is a frequent occurrence. Too many plums spoil the pudding.' And he motioned Edward to a chair which had spread to the breadth of a divan and sunk to the

low lines of a footstool. Edward dropped nervously into its folds as the Tutor looked nervously round the room for a door. Edward ventured to congratulate him on the noble appearance of the College Chapel. 'Yes—yes! I cannot say I have noticed it lately. But I believe you are right. Yes—yes.' Edward had never met English courtliness before, and wondered whether such urbanity pervaded King's society. It must be like living in an old-fashioned Thackeray novel. His train of thought was interrupted by a smiling confidence on the part of the Tutor, whose hint Edward had failed to notice. 'The Dean of the College—yes—the Dean has, I believe, expressed a wish that can be understood to meet you as soon as possible—that is to say, as soon as would be convenient for you.' Edward took the hint, catapulted out of the chair and stalked backwards to the door. 'One thing,' suggested the Tutor, who looked like Savonarola, if that Florentine Friar could have lived at Winchester and been described by Jane Austen, 'one thing I think you should remember when you visit the Dean. You should get a gown, get a gown—yes—yes—get a gown. You will then not be mistaken for a tradesman.' He could not have put it more kindly.

Edward had quite forgotten. His gown had been ordered weeks past and should be waiting in his room, whither a porter was waiting to wheel him and his luggage. Through the Great Court he strode past enormous darkened buildings into a wide open space, across which twinkled the lights of another College. A low Gothic shadow loomed leftward. 'Provost's Lodge!' whispered the Porter. Instinctively Edward raised his cap. He dared not ask the Provost's name. It was disgraceful not to know. Perhaps he might worm it out of the Porter. 'What gentleman lives there?' 'The Provost, sir!' Edward gave it up; besides, he was walking in a delightful trance. . . . No longer alone as he used to walk on the London Road. He was one of

many, part of a great invisible procession, who had come to Cambridge during the centuries, drawn their refreshment of poetry and religion, and passed whither ? . . . upon their way. Cambridge had been the habitation of monks and friars and students of the Middle Ages, whose faith and learning had filled the fenland with a pure dim light—and there arose vision of the holy founders and royal patrons and wise widows, who of their sublime alms had set apart this corner of the kingdom to resemble the City of God. Edward thought of the great scholars and the humanists, who made the new learning, and then of the Classical editors and the planet-discoverers and the missionaries and the preachers and the teachers, who had passed as he was passing through this cool oasis of pinnacles and towers before they set foot upon the sands of the desert of eternity. About him in the night stretched acres of buildings dedicated to the calm and comforts of religion. The night made their lineaments obscure, but Edward could deduce their form from the regular blotches of light set in the casements. These were the high bastions of science ! These were the sanctuaries of religion ! Mighty and monstrous shadows ! He felt like a gnat perching on a Colossus. . . . His reverie was broken by the Porter, who led him up the first staircase in a modern unfinished rectangle designated as Bodley's. On the top landing Edward turned to the right under a doorway already graced by his name in white letters, STORNINGTON. Opposite was a similar door and the name JASPER. Between was a sink and a cupboard, under the charge of a charming old lady, his bedmaker, who with rosy smiles discussed the stores necessary to the morrow's breakfast. Edward entered as in a dream the room which was to be his home for three years. On the door of the cupboard there was an untranslatable motto in German, and the names of previous occupants. Edward hoped his would not be unworthy of the list. It was a modest hope, that depended entirely on remembering

to pay seven-and-sixpence when he vacated the rooms. But for the moment Edward associated the gold lettering with the fame and success that can only be won in the halls of examination.

It had been a day of novelty and wonderment, and well content with the academic world and his now academical self, he threw himself into bed without scrutinising the slender furniture his predecessor had left him at his own valuation. . . . At eight the next morning his bedmaker called him, and Edward was distressed to find that he had missed Chapel. He gave her strict orders to call him at seven for the remainder of his time at Cambridge. After a cold sponging he surveyed his modest demesne delightedly, for possession is a stronger emotion than comfort. He sat down alone to breakfast and rehearsed his demeanour before the Dean. The bedmaker tried to hurry his thoughts through a budget of ways and means. She demanded the payment of at least two pounds under pain of letting his rooms instantly cease to be the envy of every young gentleman in the College. Edward had come up to Cambridge with thirty shillings in his pockets, and decided that so large a disbursement would be inappropriate, and possibly impossible. He compromised on a new broom and a few parcels of perishable stores, which she thought she could get for less than ten shillings. Left to himself, Edward began dreaming. The College clock stirred memory of the Dean. His gown and cap were luckily on the table. He assumed gown with some of the emotion of a private fitting his first uniform, or of a curate trying his virgin surplice. He adjusted the mortar-board with its docked tassel on his swelling head, and rightly clothed, though not feeling wholly in his normal mind, he sought the rooms of the Dean.

The interview with the Dean was not frightening. Edward had pictured a pompous and preposterous individual engaged in issuing standing orders on behalf of the Trinity, or in showing foreign royalty the sights of

the College. On entering in response to the human sound evoked by his knock, he was unable to see anything human at all. A slightly perceptible rustle of sound betrayed the inhabitation of the rooms. It took Edward some time to disfocus his eyes from dusty shelves stuffed with books ceiling-high, varied only by Medici prints, whose primitive colours had dissolved in the Cambridge damp, and a few of those trophies of bachelordom which survive only in curio shops or in the apartments of College Dons. Edward, bringing his eyes to the proper plane, beheld the Dean concealing himself behind an enormous chair. If the chair had been a little bigger, or the Dean a little smaller, the manœuvre might have been successful. Edward wondered why he should seek concealment from one so insignificant as himself. It was like a gaunt hare trying to hide from a fresh mouse. He ventured to announce his entrance by saying how much he admired the Chapel. The Dean eyed him with a look of sour suspicion. Edward then remarked that he had been reading a little Aristotle during the summer, but without showing any assumptional familiarity with the Stagyrte. The Dean went apparently deaf, and dropped his eyes in untiring search for the long-lost pattern of the carpet. 'You came up yesterday?' observed the Dean, as though he were setting a rather tricky question. 'Yes, sir,' replied Edward. 'The Tutor, I think he is Mr. MacKennon, informed my father that yesterday was the right day.' Against this successful appeal the Dean had nothing to remark, and shifted his beady eye to a spot where the morning light illumined the carpet. There fixed, he continued his study as though it were an early ecclesiastical palimpsest of which the original text had been obliterated by subsequent owners.

Edward decided to make another attempt to discover the name of the Provost, for whose health he inquired tenderly. 'The Provost is well, and still engaged on his edition of the Sibylline books,' replied the Dean, who

continued speaking with alternate suspicion and embarrassment. 'You are expected to keep our hours. Never stay out after twelve.' Edward promised to go to bed at ten every night. 'And there is an institution called Chapel of which you may have heard. Once on Sundays please, and four times a week unless you prefer to sign your name with the Porter at the Gate.' Edward shook an indignant protest at this secular suggestion and said, 'I pray, sir, I shall never miss a week-day Chapel.' The Dean was used to religious enthusiasm and passed no comment. 'We will be more than satisfied with four times a week,' he said curtly, and returned to the contemplation of the carpet. Edward withdrew, raking his mind for some parting sentence to impress the Dean, and blurted out, 'I hope, sir, while I am in College to redeem myself.' No reply followed. 'My Redeemer helping,' he added. The Dean tossed his head with a melancholy laugh and subsided into total deafness. Edward waited a moment before referring to his clerical ambition. 'Well, do not be a clergyman in any offensive sense,' grunted the Dean. 'We clerics suffer from clericalism.' Again Edward sought a line on the mysterious Provost. How was he to know and venerate him? The Dean answered, 'The Provost is essentially himself. Though a Deacon, he has reformed this College and made it tolerable to a layman. He knows all the ghost stories of the last thousand years. He walks in the paths of mediæval Apocrypha and finds relaxation in obscure Hagiology. You may overhear him humming the Archbishops of York backwards, or counting the Spanish Cathedrals in feet. He is likely to be consulted when those Books are opened with which we are threatened on the last day.' The Dean leaned back with a grey smile.

Alone in his rooms, Edward began the congenial task of unpacking his books, mostly well-scored Teubner texts in dingy saffron covers, which his father had promised to have bound for him as a Christmas present.

Each book spoke of long lonely hours. Each was a sealed packet in his memory. Once on his shelves, they made the room seem his own from the beginning. They had robbed him of his boyhood, and had cut him from sport and games, but each was a brick in the *scala sancta* or *pons asinorum* or Tower of Babel he was building for himself into the future, over undreamed gulfs. He must make sure that Examiners and Deans and Bishops and Recording Angels should always find him prepared against their coming . . . and against an accurate knowledge of Lucretius and Aristotle the Devil himself could not prevail.

It was midday, and the musical grumble of the mixed clocks and chimes of Cambridge roused him from introspection. He felt exhilarated, and as exhilaration with him usually took the form of prayer, he fell on his knees and prayed against the day of the Tripos Examination. He wished his parents could see him lowly kneeling as it were outside the house of fame. He wished the quiet villagers to know him in his gown. Lady Trywilliam would think him worthier of Julius. He remembered that Julius was due that day for the Second Part of the 'Little Go,' and he prayed for his success. He wished Veronica were there to help him with his gown. Thoughts wandered. . . . He went for a walk. There was a card for him in the Porter's Lodge, with an invitation to coffee that evening at a fellow Kingsman's, Mr. Sherrard on Staircase D. He sauntered into King's Parade, feeling as wise as he looked.

Standing outside the gates a strange figure loomed. It was neither Don, graduate nor undergraduate, but it seemed to have an uncanny connection with the old stones. Its head resembled a tortoise peering under its jointed shell. Over one eye hung a black patch, and his Adam's apple moved like a billiard ball tumbling into a pocket. He was dressed in a provocative check suit, neither silenced nor modified by its age. A chipped celluloid collar and a garish tie, pierced by a big brass

pin, bound his head to his body. A low bowler hat set off this fantastic figure. His approach was so genial that Edward felt convinced he was a tradesman. But it was not so, for Edward was quickly caught into a turbulent eddy of conversation, following an offer to show him the University. 'See the University, sir? See the great Colleges?'

Edward fell satellite-like into the orbit of the one-orbed. He felt himself held as though by an Antiquarian Mariner, who continued his credentials, 'I'm well known here, sir. Everybody knows me. The Provost knows me. The Police know me. I'm downright honest. Whenever anything is lost I find it and I take it to the Police.' Edward, feeling rather lost, submitted to his companionship, and they moved down the Parade. 'The royal College of King's was founded in the year 1440 by King Henry the Sixth. The Chapel is exactly 289 feet long and 80 feet high. Oh, I know I am right. Here I have it in a printed book the late Provost gave me.'

Edward could hardly stop laughing, but the pathos of his guide appealed to him and he suffered the grand tour. 'This is the Senate House, sir, and opposite is Great St. Mary's Church. The dimensions of the Church——' 'Oh, never mind the figures,' said Edward, and let his mentor sweep him down Trinity Street. 'That, sir, is Keys College, and I show it to hundreds of visitors.' They passed down a curving street full of modern and flashy shops, yielding on the left to the sudden vision of the great Gate of Trinity. Turreted, the mighty entrance with its ogee panelling and heraldry did no more than frame the squat statue of a sodden-looking buffoon. 'Henry the Eighth!' The guide was again lapsing into accurate information. 'Now, sir, you observe the arms of France ancient and of England quarterly and the three-tagged label charged with a tortoise for the Duke of York, and the ostrich feathers for the Black Prince, and the blank shield for the baby died in infancy, very sad affair indeed, sir, and roses for

the Duke of Clarence, and the vermin for the Duke of Lancaster called John of Gaunt, and in the middle are the lions of their most respected father, King Edward the Third, who founded this College—but I am afraid, sir, I am not allowed inside.'

Edward peered into the mighty space, and out of courtesy for his guide, continued down the street. He became aware of the rich red of mediæval bricks in contrast to the white and sickly coloured plinths of modern Cambridge work.

'St. John the Evangelist's College, sir.'

Edward glanced at a wine-red mass of brick frayed with grey stone. It was a lovely façade, coloured like terra-cotta, dead-rose, ruby-spilth. The rills over the gate were set with carved marguerites—'founded by Margaret, Countess of Richmond and mother of King Henry the Seventh, sir.' Above the gate were the royal arms, surmounted by a projecting crown and supported by two gracefully excited but not over-rampant yales. Roses and portcullises decked the front, and a benign Saint John, looking bewigged and befuddled, stood bracketed in his niche. All the brickwork was darkened by secular suns to a heliotropic colour with tinges of claret. Edward decided to return and call on Julius in his rooms in Trinity, and dismissed his guide gratefully. A shilling met with voluble appreciations of the donor and of the donee's character. 'The Master of Trinity knows me well, sir. I bear a very honest character. I found the scarf-pin of the late Professor of Divinity, I did. And I found the bundle of bank-notes Doctor Sedgwick lost years ago. I counted out every one of them to the Police. None was missing. Oh, I am very well known, sir. I can show you everything that's to be seen, and I find everything that's to be found,' and his face underwent contortions befitting a pirate's physiognomy in the throes of mental auto-eroticism.

It was an experience more than a sensation to enter the great Court of Trinity. Open-mouthed, Edward

followed the flagged path past a Renaissance fountain, which poured an incessant drip of water through its fretted stone lacework, constant as the drip of time and the bubbling inspiration of youth. From the Hall steps opposite he viewed that immense Court of unequal sides and disproportionate buildings which had housed so many surpassing minds. The Hall was open, and he slipped past the screens. The windows glowed with blazoned heraldry under the heavy hanging roof. Painted rows of illustrious alumni struck wonder and awe into callow undergraduatehood. Tennyson and Thackeray and Byron for literature alone. There hung that dull metamorphosis of the Trinity into Anglican episcopacy, Benson, Westcott and Lightfoot. What was Byron, limping, lecherous, loveworn, doing in that gallery of Anglican worthies? It was not for Edward to ask, and he continued slowly to the Chapel, where the deified Trinitarians sit in a Valhalla of undertaker's marble, Newton peering for an outlet into space, Macaulay threading his purple inaccuracies, Bacon snoozing, Tennyson bored, and Whewell trying to forget he was forgotten.

Opposite the Chapel Edward found rooms above which Julius's name was painted in neat characters, surmounted by a chalky scrawl, 'To Hell with Greek.' He opened to a cheery welcome: 'Come in, old man, and for God's sake drop that gown! It's only worn at night. Never expected to see you so soon. Thought you would be nosing lexicons your first week.'

'I'm not working as hard as I might,' laughed Edward, 'because I thought I would have a little look round. Isn't it magnificent? I am so glad it is Cambridge, not Oxford.'

Julius's rooms were well garnished. Against a brilliant wall-paper hung comic sporting prints after the school of Jorrocks. The rules of the Eton Society were nailed over a wash-basin within a bedroom piled with cricket bats and silver cups. Culture was represented by a piano crowned with potted ferns. 'Whisky or cigarettes?'

drawled Julius, and Edward, fearing smoke less than the firewater, slipped a Russian weed with Julius's initials gilded on the paper into his waistcoat pocket. 'You're allowed to smoke here,' laughed Julius. Edward nodded, deciding, however, to make the experiment in his own rooms. 'Well, you find me trying to make up my mind,' said Julius. 'Science or Classics?' suggested Edward. 'Good God, no! Rowing or Rugger. Men come up to do one or the other. I can't take to rowing late in life, but whether I can pick up Rugger after the Eton game, God only knows.' The secret seemed likely to be left with the Eternal, for, pulling out and unlocking a whisky-Tantalus, Julius offered Edward drink anew. Edward apologised and withdrew across the Court in the twilight. The windows of the Hall gleamed like luminous jewellery between the mullions. The cobbles and paving hummed to the stroke of invisible but sturdy feet. The multitudinous stomach of Trinity dined early and by relays.

That evening Edward dined for the first time in Hall, an experience full of incident and interest. He watched the Bachelors of Arts saunter to their napkins and chairs, and the Fellows enter and stand at the High Table, while a Scholar raced through the old Latin Grace:—'BENEDIC DOMINE NOBIS ET HIS DONIS TUIS, QUAE DE TUA GRATIA ET MUNIFICENTIA SUMUS IAM SUMPTURI; ET CONCEDE UT ILLI SALUBRITER A TE NUTRITI TIBI DEBITUM OBSEQUIUM PRAESTARE VALEAMUS PER CHRISTUM DOMINUM NOSTRUM. AMEN.' On the walls hung the choice Kingsmen, who had been famous either in King's or less probably in the outer world. Edward's neighbour drew him into conversation as to their identity. The prim prude with a humourless smile as of an angel watching the lost was Simeon, the Evangelical. The vastly learned librarian, Henry Bradshaw, weighted the next frame. Chief Justice Camden and Sir Horace Walpole were better known to the world. The other portraits seemed to contemplate the process of their own oblivion. Dinner over, at a charge of one-and-elevenpence, the undergraduates rose,

leaving the Fellows to satisfy their higher selves with conversation and their lower feelings with port.

Edward followed his invitation up another bleak stairway to Mr. Sherrard's room, where third-year men were offering Freshmen that curious blend of College coffee, which tastes as though it had been made at one annual brewing like the College ale, and heated up for purposes of retail. Mr. Sherrard was a young Fellow who had not yet returned from Hall. The furniture of paralysed chairs and suffering sofas was piled with thoughtful coffee-drinkers. There was a good deal of College small-talk, but nothing about games. The younger discussed the older members of the College. Talk never emerged, as Edward was hoping, into the Universe of Ideas. He had several tags of Aristotle ready in case, but it did not pass the College screen. King's buzzed with its own hum: King's dons, King's freaks, King's types, King's gyps.

Two young Fellows arrived, announcing that conversation in the Combination-room had become a little thick—not lewd, they explained, but lethargic. Edward recognised the presiding officer of his examination in Mr. Sherrard. He was a white-haired boy, far more youthful in his manner than the solemn Freshmen, waiting for a lead. He was practising his turn in a Greek play, presumably a comedy, for he did a turn on the floor in imitation of the Aristophanic character, learning to fly in order to take his place in the society of Birds. Standing on the sofa with his gown tucked pinionwise, he essayed several flights, which were received with delirious laughter. 'The odd thing at present,' he said, 'is that for the first time Classical and Science men at King's are trying to do the same thing—flying! At present honours are with us,' and he took graceful flight into an arm-chair. He was accompanied by a tallish, baldish Professor, supposedly the youngest who had ever professed, who had slipped his Master's silk gown and displayed a ragged tweed jacket out of elbows. He was under-

stood to be able to convey economical data in the form of algebraical acrostics. His tall brow, friendly eye and lackadaisical manner bespoke the modern Fellow of King's, tolerantly cynical of superiors, but humbly informative to inferiors in the realm of the mind. He was famous in King's for his tentative tolerance of Theism. It made an interesting foil to pure Agnosticism.

Religious discussion was initiated in the light of College politics. There was feeling in the College between High and Low Churchmen, and stronger still between Christian and Agnostic. Edward pricked his ears. 'Nobody of intelligence in the College ever goes to Eleusis,' remarked a sallow youth. It was some time before Edward grasped that he referred to the mysteries of Holy Communion. Nor did he recognise the Holy Bible as 'the Book whose style is obscure and whose plot is involved.' The conversation frequently alluded to a book by Brazier, a Trinity Don—called the *Silver Apple*. It seemed to inspire reference of Christian forms and beliefs to heathenish or classical terms for the fun of seeing the orthodox squirm. Edward caught an occasional sentence: 'The Bacchanals seem going strong with another revival advertised.'

'Religious enthusiasm is really a nuisance. We shall soon have Filmer busy again. I hear he has served an ultimatum on the Provost that he will publicly protest in Hall the next time an agnostic Scholar is allowed to read the Lessons in Chapel.'

'That is too much. He has deluged the College with tracts denouncing the College apostasy. He must be mad.'

'He won't be dangerous unless he joins the pontifical party. As long as he is content with preaching in the Market Place and wearing black underclothing and baptizing himself in his bath every morning he will be harmless. But suppose the High Church people catch and turn him into a friar?'

‘The Oxford Movement will never flourish here. It is the imported religion of Isis.’

The subject of the College Mission was discussed. Apparently King’s, owing to divergence of views, was the only College in Cambridge which declined to support a clerical mission in the London slums. It had been found impossible for the youthful supporters of High and Low Church to agree on the doctrine to be taught to the unwashed. ‘They will never get together after last term. They are not on praying terms even. Some burn holy candles in their rooms, and the others wear out holy carpets praying outside the rooms of those they are anxious to save.’

‘If the College Mission crops up again,’ suggested one of the Dons, ‘I think we might begin an Agnostic Mission, for which the London working men must be quite ripe.’

‘Why not? We are in a majority. And it would represent the College mind.’

‘Why shouldn’t the Fabians and Shavians claim some recognition of their cult?’

‘There are always enough first-year greenhorns in red ties, if coloured cambric is a sufficient sign.’

‘Anything is better than the sacerdotalists, who combine black arts with white stoles, exorcism and incense. Why not a Vegetarian Mission to city men? After all, Eustace Miles is our only famous Kingsman now.’

Edward did not share in this astounding conversation, but he felt that his father would not have liked him to be there, and a real regret that he was not better equipped to join in such subtlety of mind and speech. He returned to his room, and prayed for strength and wisdom to become a champion of Christendom. How splendid to defend Christ with his intellect, and turn the tables by showing that He was the greatest Agnostic after all!

In the morning he sought the *Silver Apple* in the College Library. It afforded many clues to the evening’s conversation. It reduced religion everywhere to theories

of a Divine Scapegoat, a Dying God and the Spirits in the Corn and the Wine. It read like a dangerous parody of Christianity. It was bulked by uncritical notes of travellers and missionaries. It read too true to be good, thought Edward. Besides, he could not digest the vegetable origin of religion. Were the gods Cabbages or Kings ?

CHAPTER VII

KING'S INSTITUTIONS

THE high-pitched bell for early service was tinkling in its minaret when Edward reached consciousness. Edward was provided with a surplice, for the entire College appeared in white raiment on Sundays. Using a shortened form of ablutions, he hurried down the staircase and ran, with the morning breeze bellying his surplice, across the front Court to the crumbling entrance of Chapel. For the first proud time he wore the levitical alb. . . . At the door the eupeptic College Clerk, a superlative verger, in his velvet-collared gown, led him through the Antechapel to a place beyond the mighty screen of blackened oak. The enormous spaces of the Chapel yawned upon him, and he felt like a green caterpillar turned into a butterfly overnight. But a white cabbage butterfly swept into a tunnel could not have felt more insignificant than Edward when he glanced at the far-away, lacelike roof and palisades of fretted stone miraculously suspensive in air. The Antechapel was cut off by the crushing screen, which lay moored like a galleon, while the organ-case itself rose like a ship's bridge ribbed with reeds and pipes.

Poets and prophets have tried to express the majesty and meaning of King's College Chapel, but it abides their questioning, like some imperishable dream out of the Middle Ages, or the battlements of some supernatural Cinque Port, whose busy world and ancient sea have perished, while generations forgetful of its meaning swarm about its foundations until they too pass into forgetfulness. Who can describe those dizzy walls

of grey magnesian limestone, wrought with the fossilised flora and fauna of a heraldic age, direful dragons and gigantic greyhounds and the two-petalled Tudor roses gathering the red and the white into one lovely calyx? Carved crowns, circlets and coronets of stone jut between the great glass spaces and the curving bays, penetrated by the sad dungeon light of abandoned chantries. In the heights above floats the fan vaulting, arch holding arch and web unravelling web, while the whole entanglement of stone stretches like a skein of silk across the roof. From the fernlike groining to the canopied stalls groups of slender identical columns catch and divide the passionless strain. They are like the silent pipes of some immense organ fitted titanically but delicately enough to modulate the harmony of the spheres. Between the columnar sheafs gleams the famous coloured glass held in leaden webs to the stonework. No narrow slits or measured allowances of light, for each is a lavish sheet of blazing glaze. Edward's soul gushed Godward like a match among hot coals!

The Dean and Chaplain were wandering to a distant altar, and the Communion Service automatically began. There were only half a dozen present, and Edward wondered if the bedmakers had generally forgotten to call the College. The service, though inaudible, was impressive, and he attained mystical happiness. At Cherryumpton the service was low and hurried. The medium of the Last Supper was decanted port. But receiving the Cup at King's was like quaffing the Holy Graal. It was a white sweet wine: the *Lacrima Christi*. Edward felt he had received some vague initiation and walked back with folded hands. The colour of the glass transfigured his soul. Unknown sanctities and duties summoned him like clarion call. The Golden Legend surrounded and inspired him. Those wonderful windows had not been stained and emblazoned to feed the gaping tourist or to tickle the antiquarian, but to delight and lead the simple and youthful into the paths of righteousness.

Edward was filled with a sense of indefinable mission . . . to the unilluminated and disinherited—to those who knew not Christ or Cambridge.

Was this the pith of world's history and the solid foundation of all Christendom, or was it only a coloured dream? The mediæval mind had made gallant efforts to connect the two Testaments by interlacing type and anti-type in the glass. There was the antithesis of Eve and the Virgin Mary, the marriage of the Virgin reflected in the marriage of Tobias, the Magi adoring Christ and the Queen of Sheba adoring Solomon. It looked like a game of Biblical couplets: Christ and Naaman in the Jordan, Christ thorn-crowned and the garlanded bridegroom of the Book of Canticles, Jonah exuding from the whale in foresighted symbol of the Resurrection, the Magdalene at the empty sepulchre with Reuben standing at the empty pit. . . . There was Elijah foreshowing the Ascension by his own skyward disappearance. And above was that roof, ceiled as only the ceilings are ceiled in Heaven. Like a white broom the morning sun had wiped away the cobweb of night. Streams of tinted air poured down the grey walls.

Edward caught colour rather than design, colour for which he felt bursts of ocular ecstasy. Geese make swans and greys are golds in Youth's first dream, and splendourful and gorgeous is the appeal of real beauty and brightness. In wonderful raiment the beams of the morning sun crept upon Edward's swooning eyes. Yellow and scarlet patches broke through the argentine glaze without a half-tint or a semi-tone to modify their clash. The sun's rays collected in the fine Venetian gold, in the fantastic flesh pinks and languishing rose, melting and emblazoning the glass to cyclamen and peach-blossom and heliotropic sanguine, but cooling into clotted clarets and the murrey hue of bull's blood. Slowly the sun stole along the Chapel like the face of a mighty dial, dwelling an hour upon each window and stirring blobs, blurs and blotches of glaucous greens,

cinereal amethysts and gorgeous oranges, while the heraldry aloft blazed in asteriated sapphire and aureate sateen. All the trimmings of the original Deuteronomic rainbow preserved in amber !

As Edward left his place in the oaken stalls, he noticed a young gentleman with bent head and haggard eyes bowing low as if he had dropped his glasses and were searching for them. Edward, anxious to follow the customs of the College, bowed as well. His eyes met a swift glance of recognition, and he was asked whether he was a Freshman. Edward confessed with pride and humility that it was so.

‘I hope you will come to my rooms on Sunday evenings. My name is Jasper, and I am at home to Churchmen. The early service is so much more refreshing than the glorified Matins that follow. As for the Evening Concert, we Catholics cut it altogether.’

‘I should love to come,’ said Edward, ‘but am I a Catholic?’ ‘You must be, or you would not have bowed to the altar.’ Edward’s simple motion had been construed into a symptom of dogmatic belief.

‘You must come and meet the Catholics here,’ continued Jasper. ‘You know the College is almost entirely agnostic now. And the Dons are becoming atheist. No Christian can ever become a Fellow of King’s. I doubt if St. Peter himself would be admitted as Head Porter.’

Edward felt immensely shocked. That would account for the conversation in Sherrard’s rooms. It was his duty to align himself as soon as possible with the defenders of religion in this College dedicated to piety by the holy King Henry. He strolled back filled with undefined perplexities. His time was not likely to be so smooth and quiet as he had hoped. He ate breakfast standing in his surplice. The Chapel bell found him reading the Psalms of the day in delighted anticipation of the choral performances for which King’s was famous.

The ten o’clock bell was more successful than the

earlier in collecting a congregation. The two sides of the quadrilateral between the Gate and the Chapel filled with a moving mass of visitors and outsiders. Jasper stopped beside Edward on the way and muttered, 'The Townees' Cathedral!' It was true enough, and with a smile Edward eagerly but not too hurriedly followed the surpliced line of Kingsmen. The Bachelors in their white rabbit hoods made him feel rather a novice. It was a gratification, however, to pass through the screen and to sit apart from the townspeople, who only came as a means of enjoying music free. A College gyp noted his name, and he took his seat, as content a being as sat that Sabbath on God's earth. Suddenly the clock struck, and the choir of guarded cherubs advanced into the Chapel, preceded by their pedagogue and followed by the choral scholars and the Dean and Chaplain. Within the sacred screen the Provost and Vice-Provost were helped by a gentleman armed with a Holy Poker or silver thyrsus into the loose-boxes of carved oak at either side. The doors to the Antechapel were solemnly closed, and the Order of Morning Prayer proceeded at the highest possible pitch of beauty attainable on earth.

Listening to the divine choir, Edward forgot all direct worship of the Deity, and even omitted the conventional mouthing of words practised by tuneless people in Church. He was listening to the silver notation of the Psalms sung antiphonally by the boys, and felt himself caught in swift wavelets of organ music from above. The wooden Seraphim standing on either corner of the organ like gilt gingerbread figures woke to life and blew cadences of sound through their gold trumpets. The whole screen yielded the mellow sound of wood when it echoes the palpitation of fingered cords. It was like a cask stored with the fragrance and vintage of the past. The Lessons were read inaudibly by Scholars of the College from the enormous brass lectern tipped by a statuette of the Founder and poised on four sejant lions. Edward tried to pick Scriptural identities in the

cascares of colour which flowed in brilliant blots and speckled splendours through the stonework.

He was woken in his reverie by hearing the Dean preaching and asking for acceptance of the Gospel as an ethical standard rather than historical fact. 'Imagine a series of rather unexpected occurrences in a very primitive and I might say uncivilised community, as they would appear when reported by the rather emotional and quite unscholarly witnesses in retrospect many years afterwards.' Of course, worthy people were still ready to swallow the Bible literally, but were they doing their intellectual best? Was not the spirit of Christ one of cheerful doubt and even anger at orthodox obstinacy? There were people who went so far as to swallow more than the Gospels even stated, whether they were Roman Catholics or their followers amongst the English clergy. It was probably better not to swallow at all than to swallow too much. Better to remain honest. And the uninspiring sermon closed on a melancholy aspiration from Marcus Aurelius.

When Edward returned to his rooms, a gyp accosted him and asked him if he would be so good as to lunch with Mr. Oliver Brownlow in his rooms over A staircase. Mr. Brownlow, like the Dean, was another schoolmaster who had despaired of the Eton system and been translated to King's, in the way that emeritus-officers of State are promoted to the House of Lords. Edward was not unprepared for the O.B., as he was called. Gossip and anecdotage in King's among Dons or gyps, at the High Table or at the Freshers' bench, largely treated of O.B. The College was divided into steady dislike or uproarious appreciation. Merits and demerits in the ordinary sense he had none, for he could only be judged by his own voluble standards. It was impossible to pass twenty-four hours in King's without acquiring a short history as well as an astonishing amount of apocrypha concerning the O.B. By those initials he was known to mortal and terrestrial beings,

though it was believed that Grand Dukes had their own nickname for the celebrated Oliver Brownlow. Of him the most portentous and frivolous and often libellous things were said, whispered and shouted in or out of his presence, for his friends and enemies astonishingly agreed in what they said about him. It was only by their tone that enmity or amity could be gauged. As long as they would vociferate his public triumphs and private vices he was content. A human being who belauded or hated him not was always a recurring sorrow to the O.B. The most ridiculous yarns were suspected of originating as 'O.B. *iter dicta*' themselves. He would tear his own character to shreds rather than suffer anonymity. But King's without him was not King's, and everybody in King's realised that one day King's would not be King's. Like a huge obese bubble he floated about the Courts, knowing too well that he was the biggest frog in the pond.

Edward made his way to the famous rooms. A baized door admitted him into an enormous lounge, whose bookish gloom was dispelled by the fantastic vigour and warmth of the extraordinary creature it contained. The walls looked heavy with the grubby gold paper, which it was supposed had been mounted in expectation of a visit from the Queen of Madagascar. Behind shabby curtains were piled some of the books that a Professor of Universal History might be expected to read or even to write. The *Cambridge Modern History* lay open at random with a number of defects marked in blue pencil. On the writing-table stood the University Calendar and the Almanack de Gotha. One picture on the walls was a striking portrait in heavy sticky brown oil and gold paste from the brush of Zuluoga, destined to become the priceless heirloom of the College.

The O.B. was surrounded by a group of shy Freshmen, meeting him for the first time. With a waddling walk and a joyous shake he grasped Edward's trembling hand in a pulpy fin and said, 'My dear

boy, how could you have failed to come and see me before? You know from your *Catechism* your duty to your neighbour on arrival in this College.' Edward apologised. He would as well have looked in to the Master of Trinity's for breakfast. But the O.B. seemed to invite familiarity and expect jovial rudeness from undergraduates. The young men asked to lunch were engaged either in gulping down the roars of the lion or making fun of him under his skin. 'I have always made a point of meeting famous people at least once,' the O.B. was saying. 'And most of them make a point that it should be *once*,' whispered a supercilious youth in the corner. The O.B. uttered a flood of reminiscences, controversies, assertions, pettinesses and grandiloquences. 'I have tried forty languages. I find Finnish very beautiful.' The lunch came, it went, and it conquered. All conversation was quelled save that of the host, describing that period of his life which coincided with the rise and fall of the History School at Cambridge. 'Only historians have the right to alter history.' Long before the end of lunch Edward had promised to abandon the Classical for the Historical Tripos.

It was extraordinary in how many portraits and phases the O.B. was able to appear to his guests. At the mention of any politics or philosophy he immediately spoke as one having œcumenical authority. The coming Elections were broached, and the O.B. rapidly described two personal experiences at the Polls. Religion was mentioned, and the O.B. acclaimed himself a distinguished convert to Christian Science. 'I had to adopt an American form of religion. It would have caused too much jealousy if I had adopted a European one.' A historical turn brought the conversation to the Papacy. The O.B. immediately described his presence, and hinted a personal part at the Vatican Council. Edward was left with the impression that the O.B. believed in his own Infallibility, and less tolerantly accepted that of the Pope.

He seemed one of the earth's supremely happy people, for whatever reverses or contradictions he received he always knew that he was right. If doubts crossed his mind, he gave them slight quarter. He was rather like a Leviathan. He bulked mightily and he was one of the most buoyant swimmers in the University. He was unique and at once universal. King's College was known to Europe as the O.B.'s resting-place, and Europe was largely interpreted to King's in terms of the O.B.'s stamping-ground. Courts and countries where the O.B. could not stamp were not worth stamping upon. Such was the insatiable and unsatisfying O.B., lovable and quarrelsome, exuding hates and loves, swollen with uncooked knowledge, portentous with vociferous ignorance, capable of playing any part and assuming any rôle, including the colossal misrepresentation of himself, which could be described as Falstaff playing Hamlet. From week to week the College was amused, tickled or enraged by the O.B. If it happened that he had failed to utter something outrageous during the week, it was invented for him. The wits of the College would rise to a crescendo of creative caricature, which might perhaps reach the O.B. in time for him to rush out and explode in the Combination-room as original!

Edward was woken by the Chapel bell from the daze into which the jabber of the O.B. threw him. It was time for evening service, and after carefully memorising his duty as a Kingsman to return to the O.B.'s rooms that evening and every Sunday evening at nine, he wandered back to Chapel.

Throwing on his white surplice, Edward passed into the twilight beauty of the Chapel. In the dusk it seemed even more colossal. Long rows of lighted tapers threw an angelic gleam upon the choir. Below the shadows of the Seraphim the old organist played like a captain lashed to his wheel. The luscious but unenthusiastic harmonies of Anglican music rippled in cascades from his quarter-deck. The great galleon of a screen moved

forward and the Seraphim seemed like look-out men at each corner of the compass blowing with their musical trumpets into the night.

After a rather dull Hall, for on Sundays the best people give supper in their rooms, Edward made his way back to Mr. Brownlow's. The stairs were full, the passage was full, and the rooms were strained to the utmost. It was a solid squash and a joyous jam, in which the O.B. revelled like a two-year-old. It was his boast that he could be young among the old and younger still among juniors. He was hailed as an Undergraduate among Dons, and Don of the Undergraduates. Supporters and detractors were acting as a leavening force among the Freshmen whom the O.B. Jovely had compelled like a cloud into his rooms. He seemed over-liberal in his associates. He gathered the Bourgeois as well as the Bourbon, exhibiting the faults of both on an exalted scale. His nature was delightfully frank, and he opened heart and scrap-book with the same avidity to new friends. He immediately picked out Edward, and showed him calling-cards of the mighty as well as some *sharp* rebuffs in letter form—a savage repudiation from a great poet, rude excuses from Prime Ministers visiting Cambridge, and several velvety boot-blows from German Royalty. The collection only seemed to lack a Papal Excommunication and a few blackballing scores from prominent London Clubs.

The entertainment never flagged. Third-year men told second-year men what the O.B. had been in old time, and the second-year men told the Freshmen what he was to them. And the O.B. related in conclusion what he would be to all time, and in the intervals beat his hands and feet upon an undersized harmonium, which was balanced in the centre of the room upon a kind of bellows. This instrument and its music were a speciality of the O.B. He began playing the National Anthem of Roumania, in honour of one of the Romany King's aunts whom he had once met and liked at a

German Spa. . . . As the guests withdrew and the shy Freshmen grew sleepier, the O.B. became more boisterous and more confidential. He produced several bags of ancient papers, from which he proceeded to damage several reputations, including his own. Thence he turned to a long-forgotten College controversy, and fired blank powder at his successful but dead opponents, after which he was called to the door by a timid visitor, a non-collegiate student. None of the party saw the O.B. press a five-pound note on him, with the request that it should not be returned. . . . He was telling Edward how important it was for him to read for the History Tripos before he, the O.B., was ousted from his position as lecturer in the College. He had just discovered another infamous intrigue undermining him on his own ground. But he would fight for his reputation and his rights. As long as he was at King's, Kingsmen would get Firsts in the History Tripos . . . especially if he were an examiner, for he knew merit. If only one of his old pupils became Prime Minister, he might be made Regius Professor of History himself. . . . He had been training statesmen with that end. . . . 'Good-night, my dear boy, and never forget that the privilege of this evening is extended over every Sunday you are in Cambridge.'

As Edward crossed the Court at midnight he heard a strain of curious music pouring from the open window. It was as though the O.B. were engaged in dipping a bagful of rats into jugs of boiling water.

CHAPTER VIII

ROWING AND ROWERS

WITHIN a few days Edward was initiated into University life. He walked down King's Parade as though it were the backyard of his own College. He passed the Porter's Lodge without doffing cap to the porter. He even allowed the stiffening to be cut out of his mortar-board by dissipated and daring friends. He bought a pipe and kept cigarettes openly.

Of course he worked hard. He met the director of Classical Studies by appointment, Mr. Medham, another of King's youthful prodigies, though he was rumoured to be as old as the Chapel Clerk. In the cheeriest tone he discussed Edward's certain prospect of taking a double First, and as Edward did not keep his ambitions under a bushel, proposed some twenty Greek and Latin authors for his consumption from a printed list, at the same time lighting and setting down about the same number of pipes. The list had of course been prepared by a canny Tutor on the assumption that only half would be read in time for the examination. Edward went his way and began reading Pindar, Herodotus and Cicero's correspondence in dead-weight sections.

His studious calm was not suffered very long. The next morning, when he was trying to decide between attending a College lecture on Demosthenes and one on Sophocles by the Regius Professor of Greek, the door was thrown open, and a gentleman with sun-baked face and black curly head signalled hilarious intimacy. Without a word he strode across the narrow room and twisted open the window. 'Three cheers for fresh air

at all times ! ' were his first words. Edward rose politely and offered him a chair, which the intruder tossed lightly into the air and held at arm's length. ' Of course you row ! And if you don't, of course you want to row, and if you don't want to row, the College wants you to row ! Come down to the boat-house to-day at three and be tubbed. So long.'

Edward uncautiously extended his hand into a fleshly vice that drove the blood into his finger-tips. ' Oh, excuse me ! I always like to practise clutching an oar. The great trouble in this College is, that though we sweep the Tripos we have never swept the river. Men are not light enough with their hands coming forward, and don't shove hard enough back. Just look,' and sitting down he gave an illustration of the rowing defects at King's with the aid of Edward's poker. By way of showing how a blade should be drawn through the water, he threw back his head into Edward's knees, while his heavily shod feet moved into the air and tipped over the table.

' Now you know how to do it, don't you ? Well, come and be tubbed at three. If you have lunched, come now. It will save consulting maps.'

They set out at a pace that Edward thought appropriate to pedestrian championships—across the Parade, down a rabbit-run called St. Edward's Passage, across the Market Place, where decayed books and decaying vegetables could be purchased from stalls, down a throbbing artery called the Petty Cury, past Christ's Gate, over which the hooded Foundress watched from her stone tabernacle, supported by rampant yales. Passing the low ashlar College, they crossed Christ's Piece. Edward caught sight of the suggestive letters MILTON'S WALK on the outer wall. His companion quickened speed . . . they were on Midsummer Common, a dreary plain, with rows of riparian trees and stumpy boat-houses lining the unseen river in the distance. On the near side a white-washed wall spelled the faded lettering: R. CALLABY,

DOG FANCIER. Generations of the sporting had fastened their eyes on those symbols. . . . Edward hoped it would not be necessary to keep a dog. Instinctively he shrank from habits that the best people practised. They struck the River Cam, a slow, filthy, lethargic stream of the green oozy colour common to animal decay in watery surroundings. Boat-houses with flagless staffs stretched as far as the eye could carry. The best resembled ready-made College entrance gates waiting to be put into position, others Swiss chalets with one side opened by avalanche. Cries of 'Grind' produced an old man on a ferry with crank and chain like a mildewed Charon. The very last boat-house on the opposite side belonged to King's. It was full of members of the King's College Boat Club, who hailed Edward's companion as 'Hopers! Good old Hopers.' 'Here's another Fresher crazy to row. I expect he will do to coach the May boat.' This remark of Hopers caused great amusement, and the whole boat-house was thrown into a paroxysm of good spirits by his arrival. His real name, Edward later discovered from the lists of the College crews written in golden characters round the inside of the boat-house, was H. H. Hopington.

Edward was furnished with white shorts, a purple-edged zephyr and thick woollen socks of the same colour from the common stock lying on the floor. After a vain attempt to translate the Pindaric motto painted inside the eaves he was launched in a tub with a companion Fresher upon the sluggish shallows of the Cam, while Hopers held the rudder strings. Hopers gave him instruction, brief and facetious of its kind, and as the tub did move, Edward felt that rowing was not so difficult as he had expected.

After a few days of diligent tubbing Edward found his name posted in the Reading-room for the sixth thwart of a scratch Eight of Freshers under verbal supervision from Mr. Hopington. He felt as though he were rowing for his College, that he was being noticed, that he was seeing life, that he was entering manhood. He

bought a nautical outfit. An innocent pride combined with pleasurable expectation shone in his face as he took his seat in the fragile hull and was shoved into the stream by the faithful College boatman. The handle of his oar had been rasped, and he clutched it with a faint aspiration toward death or glory. Motionless on the opposite railings Hopington balanced his bicycle pedals. Cox was shouting directions—‘Forward! Are you ready? Paddle!’ And eight wooden blades followed suit like a damaged windmill into the water. There was a scream from the railings, and Hopington was seen to fall backward in a simulated faint. The surprised Freshers thought he had been taken ill, and rested sympathetically on their oars. The curses of the Cox mingled with the sarcasm of the Coach brought them to their senses. Feebly again they entered their blades under water as though scooping soup from some Gargantuan bowl. ‘Together!’ shouted Hopington, and the blades again fell in hesitating sequence under the sluggish current. To his surprise Edward noticed the boat moving rapidly between the willow-lined sludge and the minute Thames embankment crowned with cheap villadom and a ghastly set of gasworks whose pale brimstone chimney affronted earth and sky. The filthy crawling Cam could not even reflect the towering insult. . . . Downstream the merry oarsmen rowed. Not merry was the Coach.

At the first ‘easy’ Edward learnt how many canons of rowing could be broken in a short outing. Hopington left him with no doubts. The deliberately foul attitude of his hands and feet was as deplorable as the angles and altitudes of neck and back. Whether he stiffened like a plank or shot forward as loose as a banana, he seemed to offend. Other members of his erring body proved faulty. He lifted unwary feet off the stretcher and rushed his hands forward almost viciously. He dug with his oar and hoicked with his shoulders. It was consoling that Hopington noted the same faults amongst all the crew, though disconcerting that he published

them so stentoriously abroad. What would people think of him on the bank? It spoilt the relish of the trip to be lowered in public opinion.

Rowing on fixed seats is hard and horrible. Edward developed blisters which exuded blood and water, while the joints of his aching thigh-bones produced sores. Some of the Freshers withdrew and professed interest in hockey. For a while Edward contemplated less painful forms of sport. But Hopington fell upon him fiercely, and urged the ensuing loss of pleasure and muscle and character if he did not serve the King's Boat Club all the days of his Cambridge life. Hopington was a combination. He was a Mathematician in the first class of Wranglers, and he was a rough-and-tumble athlete. He ran a good Half-Mile for the Varsity, and he was rowing in the Trial Eights. He was innocent of intellectual subtlety or literary appreciation. But he was at home in remote spheres of higher mathematics. If he did not cohabit with the Fourth Dimension, he was reported to have broached familiarity with the Binomial Theorem. Among oarsmen he was accounted brainy and among Wranglers a gladiator. He found strange ecstasy in the solution of insoluble problems, and applied his knowledge of dynamics to modern rowing. He specialised in Perpetual Motion and expected Arithmetical Progression from the men he coached from the river-bank.

Edward found his personality irresistible. Day by day he trudged to the boat-house, where Freshers changed in nervous silence while the roof rang to the bassoon notes of Hopington, who sang while he washed and sang while he ate and sang while he read. In the May-boat room rowing was discussed—all that strange jargon of the river about sliding seats and stretchers and blades and buttons and the gods of the towing-path, the great rowing Coaches who hurled winged words from ponderous steeds on the resounding bank. Rowing day after day, Edward recognised the divinities of the tow-path, passing like gods of the underworld in the mists and

fogs. The scarlet-clad crews of St. John's were accompanied year in and year out by a stiff, stout, stubborn gentleman with a Trial cap on his head and a demi-cart-horse beneath him. And the Jesus College crews were owned, leased, chosen, moulded and made, licked and lugged into shape by 'Beeve.' Great and absolute and unchallenged, the famous Coaches dominated the rowers on the Cam.

King's was not a rowing College in the great sense instanced by Jesus College or Trinity Hall or the Elysian society of Old Etonians known as 'Third Trinity.' Edward overheard the May-boat men talking during the endless shivering waits on the boat-house balcony.

'There 's a Hall boat. Pretty rough!'

'Hall are professional bargees refined to style!'

'Look at that Jesus boat creeping down the river!'

'Bloody Jesuits! that 's what they are. Any means to reach the end. Head of the river at all cost. To practise their May boat they will keep men from rowing for the Varsity.'

'Where 's the Beeve?'

'I can hear if I can't see him.' And at that moment a sound like a wounded bull broke the fog and an enormous anthropoid man leisurely balanced on a strengthened bicycle was seen upbraiding a distant crew.

'SPRING AND DRAW,' said the voice, and echoed itself, 'SPRING AND DD-RR-AW!' And a crew of men in black and red ribboned vests sprang and drew. They slipped into the fog, but that remorseless voice followed, bellowing; followed after, 'Finish long! Finish long! Wait till the cows come home.' The Jesus Eight eased behind the bend, but out of the distance came a clearly enunciated comparison of their efforts to old women bed-bound. The Jesus Eight pulled themselves together and passed rhythmically onward with the sound that true Coaches envy and know. 'Tap her along! TAP HER ALONG! Tap her along!' and the mighty voice died away. The harmonious ring of the Jesus Eight was

drowned in the scurry and sprawl and splash of crews from less disciplined Colleges. All that afternoon the green grease of the Cam was cupped and eyed and eddied by octaves of perspiring oarsmen.

Hopington watched in cynical admiration. 'That is their May boat for next year. They are already practising for Henley, the cunning scoundrels! They are not sportsmen, but they can row.' Edward ventured to ask whether King's would not be practising for Henley soon. Hopington guffawed: 'Oh, we start practising for Henley the night before, if Cox can spare the time.' At that moment the Cox sang, 'Eight out!' and Edward ran eagerly to his thwart, wondering how far study and rowing were compatible pleasures.

Hopington took two Eights down to Clayhithe, 'our annual form of excursion or treat,' as the Reading-room board announced. It was a long ringing row as far as the locks at Baitsbite, where the ship was put through the pen. Two miles beyond, under the Toll Bridge, the crew disembarked again and drank tea in a snug little inn.

Swathed with sweaters over their dripping vests, the crews drank boiling tea until their souls became merry and they called Hopington for a song, whereat that industrious one hammered mathematical jingles out of a gastric piano, while the rest joined in absurd choruses:—

<i>Piano.</i>	'He that hath plenty of good peanuts—!
<i>Forte.</i>	And giveth his neighbour none!
(<i>Chorus</i>)	} He shan't have any of my peanuts—!
<i>Fortissime.</i>	} When his peanuts are done!'

For the word 'peanuts' Hopington's ingenuity supplied one absurdity after another from the realms of Advertisement:—

'He that hath plenty of good Mother Seigel's Soothing Syrup!
 And giveth his neighbour none!
 He shan't have any of my Mother Seigel's Soothing Syrup—
 When his Mother Seigel's Soothing Syrup is done!'

‘He that hath plenty of Abdominal - Belts - for - Corpulent -
Gentlemen !
And giveth his neighbour none !
He shan’t have any of my Abdominal-Belts-for-Corpulent-
Gentlemen—
When his Abdominal-Belts-for-Corpulent-Gentlemen are done !’

Edward thought it splendid, and cheered and chorussed with any of them. Then the crews in the exuberance of tea rushed into the yard and played shadow Rugger without a ball, and collared and felled each other with huge laughter and tiny shrieks from such as Edward, who always shrank a little from familiarity with older men. Once more they trooped sweating and steaming into the tap-room, and while Hopers cut mathematical figures with a fork on the window, the seniors raised the hallowed strains of the King’s Boating Song :—

‘If we all go out every day
From March till the middle of May
We’ll very soon be
At the top of the tree—
If we all go out every day !’

Singing they took seat in the boats again. For the first time the crews began to swing together, and Edward felt his first joy in getting forward together with the rest, like eight automatic swimmers in an aerial sea, and the second strong joy of pulling back the oar with the same muscles which had drawn the yew bow back to ancestral shoulder. And the third great joy he had was to hear the Coach say at the locks, ‘Well paddled, six !’

Edward rowed in Platonic reverie. There is no attainable perfection in rowing on earth : the oarsman must be a seeker of the Absolute. There must be a perfect style of rowing in the category of the Platonic Ideas. He saw himself proceeding from tub to eight oar, from Lent boat to May boat, from College to Varsity rowing without attaining the ideal. . . . The shadow of evening enfolded a deserted river. A white mist blanketed the Fenland like the creeping ghost of the undrained swamp that once held Hereward the Wake and the Great Copper

butterfly. Across the faint amethyst of the western sky delicate shoots of truncated willows spread fan. Every stretch of the river between the locks was implanted in Edward's mind. The great poplars under which the College races start, the long level strait to First Post Corner, the sinewy Gut fatal to generations of Coxes, then Grassy, the great bulging hemicycle like the loop in a great interrogation mark to the rowers— 'How Long? How Long?' and in the mist Edward could see the lights of the Plough hostelry. The eyes of the Coach no longer followed them through the greyness, but his ears listened for their splash, and he sang out each time he heard a disordered swish not amounting to the full splash dear and desirable to his ears.

The crews looked a little ghostly in the Long Reach, and Edward imagined that he was rowing after death upon the Styx with a perfection of rowing unknown to the living, with hands lighter than flesh, of course, and with a good beginning in that strange land where properly there is neither beginning nor end. That dead oarsmen would not, because they could not, be troubled by 'time' occurred to Edward as the Railway Bridge shot over his head. They had rowed back in one stretch and there was no 'easy' at the Pike and Eel. Tired and sore and numb, but they were swinging and they accomplished their course with a harmony undreamed at the start. Edward struggled gloriously out of his soaking shorts and stood quit of three pounds of oils and fats under the icy drench in the wash-house, which never felt cold when Hopington was present. The chilly water literally bubbled and boiled as he threw it about his hairy withers, chanting:—

'On a stormy tempestuous day
In the middle of May,
What a pleasure to row
For a furlong or so!
If we all go out every day
We'll very soon be
At the top of the tree.'

And the weary rowers feebly chorussed :—

‘By the top of the tree
The head of the River I mean :
A very appropriate place
For our vessel to grace
If we all go out every day.’

The faithful boatman was lighting the oil lamps, and a mellow flare fell upon the steaming naked bodies of the rowers. The bright bodies looked beautiful in the dull glow of the lamps. It was the only modern relic of the Palæstra. The hard curves of sinewy limbs were being rubbed with hard towels like the statues of the sweat-scrapers in Greek sculpture. The rowers were feeling the sweet and dry exhaustion which follows the emptying of hot pores into clinging clothes. After the chilly outing and the heated comments of the coach, Edward enjoyed his physical content. In the promiscuous nudity there was never talk of flesh or the jests of puberty. Nakedness maketh modesty. Men rubbed their flanks in ferocious silence or discoursed rowing, chiefly the Jesus style of rowing. Hopington was raucous on its ill effects. It gave Jesus fast crews every year, and when crews were average on the river Jesus went head, but they could never beat the Etonian style at its best.

‘What is Beeve’s secret?’ some one asked. ‘Oh, simply that the Jesus style is the easiest style,’ answered Hopington. ‘Easy in and easy out—one prodigious shove. It is the short cut to uniformity. *Ce n’est pas magnifique, mais c’est la guerre.*’

‘Nobody is ever the same who has been coached by Beeve,’ another said. ‘Why, nobody is ever quite the same who has rowed in the same boat!’ ‘That must be an experience.’ ‘I rowed in a scratch Eight with him once,’ meditated Hopington. ‘I also came back from India in the same boat as an elephant.’ There was a roar of laughter. ‘When there was a storm and the

boat rocked, Jumbo trumpeted and stamped with his feet to keep the boat steady. Well, that 's what it feels like to row in an unsteady boat with Beeve.'

In College that night Hopington explained the fascination of the sliding seat, which is perhaps the greatest invention of the English race. The Americans invented the rocking-chair, but out of Old England came the sliding seat, which was also a method of enabling wingless creatures to be in two places at the same time. According to Hopington, the sliding seat was the Fourth Dimension applied to rowing. Rowing stayed in Edward's life. It absorbed his spare time every afternoon, exhausting the strength it evoked, and leaving him strangely satisfied and somniferous to the outer world, even to Cambridge.

Day by day slipped deliciously away. Edward read and rowed in his rut. Every morning he took his icy sponge in the dark before running to early chapel. A handful of gowned figures always occupied the grey temple during Morning Prayer. Breakfast was swallowed standing and reading. There were bare minutes in which to dash lectureward on a bicycle. Till one o'clock he filled exercise-books with the comments of lecturers and some more clarified gleanings of his own. A lunch of dry biscuits and Bovril was followed by a spin through the town across Midsummer Common in time to be tubbed on the river and after a varying wait to share the daily row down to Baitsbite. He never failed to enjoy the start and the final easy. It was painful in patches between, but the glow of health with which he returned to his rooms and to dinner in Hall was made of the unpurchasable thrill of youth innocent at heart and ascetic of life. King's was so inspiring. Regalian life seemed to be lived on a different plane from the rest of the world. Kingsmen had no time for the Theatre or Billiards or outside amusements whether secular or religious. Each Year of Freshmen marched in a phalanx towards the distant examinations, and few lingered or lazed by the

wayside. At the head of the Scholars and Pensioners, First, Second, and Third year men, moved the Fellows of King's, the immortals of study and science, who lived their lives in the mind and pierced to true knowledge as it is only known by the masters of those who know.

CHAPTER IX

SOME KING'S DONS

As a Kingsman Edward felt generous consciousness of other Colleges existing. He even allowed the One-Eyed Tout to take him round the little Colleges suburban to King's. Like a peripatetic gargoyle the Tout was still to be found in the Market Place or on the Senate steps, waiting to charm the American visitor by a brilliance of clothes if not of information. Sometimes Edward pretended that all was illusion except the One-Eyed one, who was the only real person in Cambridge, having attained true identity in God's eyes. It gave him a secret pleasure to take him seriously and consult him as one learned in the highways and byways of the town, whose every brick and stone and stick began to catch in his memory. Love too often leads to familiarity with persons, but with places familiarity leads to love. Faces change, but places change not. The saprous Tout ministered to this love in Edward's heart.

'This 'ere is Saint Catherine's College, sir, the other side of them trees,' and Edward peered through a grove of weighty elms crowned with the floating refuges of rooks, and saw a delicate ironwork gate surmounted with the Lady Martyr's gilt wheel. Within lay a heavy, three-sided red-bricked quadrangle, with enormous windows blinking blankly upon each other, a great cavernous gateway leading nowhere, a dining-hall like a great mortuary, no signs of life except the beautiful guardian elms—Saint Catherine's, the College God forgot! Better perhaps, thought Edward, than King's, the College that forgot God.

His guide, looking alternately like the King of the Cockneys and the Ancient Mariner, continued glibly: 'The Master of Cat's lives behind that there corner. Sad story, sir. It's forty years since he came, and they say that he brought a lovely lady, but nobody ever went to visit them and they lived all alone, sir.' And the story came back to Edward of the unfortunate Master of Cat's, who was supposed to have voted for his own election, and was boycotted by the jealous University ever afterwards. Edward imagined the rosy bride he had brought to live in Cambridge as the Mistress of Cat's; waiting in that red-bricked bower for the University to call, and always waiting in vain. And the unhappy Master waiting to take his turn as Vice-Chancellor, like other Heads of Colleges, and waiting twenty, thirty, forty years in vain. It was a Don's tragedy which would have made a poem for Browning akin to 'The Grammarian's Funeral.' The old Master of Cat's never explained and never apologised, but ruled over his little kingdom of cobbles and brick and rook-haunted elms.

Work never ceased. Mr. Medham gradually infused Edward with an enthusiasm for the Classics he had not believed possible. Mr. Medham used to lecture, casually translating Cicero's correspondence between innumerable pipe-lightings as though they had been written by some elder statesman yesterday. The building in which he was to be found, called Gibbs, with its heavy sashed windows, plain pediments and strip of balustrade along the top, was in striking contrast to the mediæval tracery of the Chapel. It was all a stone incarnation of that era when Gibbs designed and Gibbons wrote. In the middle was the celebrated tunnel known as 'Jumbo' among the undergraduates, who, seeing its utter uselessness for all purposes human and divine, conceived the vague possibility that some young Rajah joining the College might care to keep his elephantine hack on the premises. The fogs and smoke of two cen-

turies had spread a mottled magpie colour like lead-rubbing on the white stonework. Mr. Medham's perpetual pipes seemed to account for the colouring.

Mr. Medham sometimes inquired into Edward's reading. 'So you have started Pindar? Well, there's nothing but to get drunk on Pindar.' Edward felt that he had acquired a head already, ploughing the Olympian Odes. However, there were more treats in store. 'By the way, I want you to attend Dr. Walter Meleager's lectures on the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus this term. Don't come to mine on Greek History unless you find them good. But you must not miss Dr. Meleager. In Europe there is no one like him—or even in King's.'

'When does he lecture?' inquired Edward. 'Oh, he doesn't lecture at all. He has lost his time sense, but exploring parties dig him out in the evenings. You had better join the next. He never knows what time of the year it is unless it snows, so be careful not to tear up paper near his rooms, or he will go away on a Christmas holiday.'

Edward laughed. 'What do you do with lecturers who won't lecture?' 'We distinctly encourage them. Lecturers do much harm, but if a Fellow of King's won't lecture or finish his book, and is unfitted by nature for the duties of Proctor or Choral Chaplain or Vice-Chancellor, he is made Bursar and runs the College.' 'What is the College Bursary like?' 'Remarkably surprising. King's, you know, is always liable to lend her Second Bursar to repair the finances of Europe. Balliol fills the ordinary high places in Church and State, but if you are going to start a new religion or regulate a new country, it is advisable to call on us. Bulgaria, for instance, is being managed not by a king at the moment, but a Kingsman. The attitude of Kingsmen to life, politics or literature is the solution to much of the world's trouble, if anybody took the trouble to listen. The word for guidance by Kingsmen and King's ideas has not yet been coined, but Aristodemocracy has

been suggested. By the way, remember not to attend my lectures unless . . .' Edward remembered at that moment that he had an appointment to show up some Latin Prose to yet another member of the famous Classical staff of King's, Mr. John Edward Tulson.

He immediately found himself scaling uncarpeted flights with a conscientious piece of sham Ciceronian under his arm. His mind ruminated the Latin Prosarians. He hated Cicero, the founder and father of everything prosy, from Augustine to Dr. Johnson. In Cæsar and Tacitus he only saw the germs of modern Journalists; the incipient War Correspondent and ironic recorder of the private lives of the great. He drew from his pocket a paragraph of Gibbon thrown, as he thought, into Ciceronian, and left it on a silver platter between Mr. Tulson's frayed cap and some tennis balls, green with the flow of age rather than with the friction of grass. For a moment Edward inspected a large railway map of England, on which all excursion trains had been marked for the past thirty years. 'It will enable me to visit so many friends without great expense,' a voice said behind him, as though divining Edward's thought. Edward whipped round. A little old gentleman, quick and quaint, spectacled and bearded, threw the kindest glance upon him out of a glass eye, while his living optic wandered over the wonderful railway map. 'Do you sing madrigals?' he asked. 'Come this evening and help us. You know who I am? I am the Gresham Professor of Tonic Sol-Fa. Last year I lectured in London about Rhetoric. You don't believe me? I invite you to attend, if you are ever in London. There's London. It's on my map.' And the Gresham Professor caught Edward's Latin Prose with a gloved hand—presumably artificial, for it turned on a pivot and lifted the exercise upside down to its undismayed owner. Having perused the paper with encouraging comments, Mr. Tulson returned to madrigals. 'You must promise to come. One of the Choral Scholars will help us, and I

am sure you sing.' Edward promised the loan of such feeble vocalism as he possessed in return for Mr. Tulson's goodwill. He was obviously a personage in the slightly insane world of Examiners whom it was important to conciliate. Madrigals then—whatever a madrigal was ! At any rate, he returned after Hall and found Mr. Tulson less peremptory and more congenial. By the end of the evening he had begun to wonder how he could have ever enjoyed life without knowing Mr. Tulson. In Hall he learnt that old Kingsmen woke up and demanded a new story about Mr. Tulson with their coffee and newspaper. Each year produced a busy concocter of the Tulson legend, which was something between the Epic of Roland and the periodical known as *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*. There had been the original catastrophe early in the history of railways, in which two members of the College had disappeared, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Tull. One only had returned, but whether it was Mr. Wilson patched with Mr. Tull, or Mr. Tull spliced with Wilsoniana, the College never decided, and had compromised on the name. It was untrue that a part of the engine had been used to give body to Mr. Tulson. Bachelors of Arts and third-year men lay awake devising new accidents and disasters into which Mr. Tulson might be inveigled. There had been the historic occasion when Mr. Tulson by hanging a spare hand absent-mindedly on the communication cord had brought a runaway train to a halt, and been publicly thanked by the Directors of the Company. There was also the famous accident when, accompanied by another Don, he had tricycled out to Grantchester to point out the exact spot where he had had an accident the previous month, and in doing so incurred the identical accident and damage over again. Accidents, stampedes, burglaries were constantly planned to test Mr. Tulson's superb sang-froid and dialectical resource under unforeseen circumstance.

Mr. Tulson welcomed Edward by leaping from the sideboard, where his silver was kept in pails of anti-rust

solution, rather like a ponderous Faun, some curious spirit evolved in the youth of the world but condemned to Donnish existence without end. Once again he snatched Edward's hand with a rudimentary fin, and with the other performed some jab-like movements in the air towards the wiping of his face. Edward likened him to an Admiral saluting in Comic Opera. The room was crowded with undergraduates and madrigalers. Claret was produced from under Mr. Tulson's bed in a priceless College decanter, presented to the College by Queen Elizabeth, and repaired since by Sir Gilbert Scott. Mr. Tulson explained his simple device for retaining the warmth of mulled claret by an arrangement of hot-water bottles. 'Guests who come late feel they have not missed anything.'

The claret was drunk with melodious aftermath. At a signal from Mr. Tulson song-books were distributed and the mixed company burst into mixed song. . . . Mr. Tulson sang with rhetorical precision, and beat time with that mechanical device which no longer needs description. But the evening's amusements were not over. When the madrigals had been throated and the claret gullested, the time arrived for coffee and cards. Mr. Tulson passed momentarily into his bedroom, and returned after affixing a spare hand, in which cards could be held or concealed. Three rubbers of whist were played for small monetary points, but in the end no gain or loss could be settled, as Mr. Tulson's patent calculator had been unkindly put out of order by a departing guest. This was a famous device, which Mr. Tulson invented and put together during his short term as Dean for the purpose of counting the average number of worshippers in the College Chapel. It consisted of several interset boxes filled with walnuts and pennies. The walnuts represented units and the pennies decimals. The first time it had been used in the porch of the Chapel there had been a lamentable spill of walnuts followed by a wild scramble to replace or eat the delicacies, which Mr.

Tulson mistaking for a riot had checked by closing the gates and announcing 'No Chapel to-day!'

The charming variety of the College lecturers enabled Edward to dispense with lectures outside. It was the pride of King's that outsiders trooped into her lecture-rooms, while only Kingsmen who had an hour to kill in the mornings went to the vaunted lecturers of Trinity. Edward made trial of Dr. Verum, who had achieved fame by the exchange of vituperative pamphlets on the editing of *Æschylus* with Dr. Meleager of King's; and the fastidious editor of Sophocles, Sir Dominick Webbe, whose Greek accents, however, were always corrected in the University Press, to the admiration of Europe. There was also Webbe's bitter rival in literature and politics, Dr. Henry Johnson. Between Webbe and Johnson lay the bitter gulfs betwixt poet and philosopher, Tory and Whig, dandy and Bohemian, while alas! there was only one Regius Chair of Greek to contain them both. As this was occupied by Webbe, it was obvious that until Webbe had himself been translated, Johnson could not be happy. King's was indifferent to the Greek Chair, knowing that in the eyes of Germany Cambridge scholarship was blazoned with the name of Dr. Meleager.

Dr. Meleager was always buried in books. Select parties of disciples were accustomed to excavate him and extract his wisdom. Edward attached himself to one of these parties, armed with note-books and copies of *Æschylus*. Dr. Meleager's name was found at the foot of the stairs in Bodley's, leading to rooms with a jutting oriel window. The rooms did not appear to have been tidied since the Deluge. Noah's folio library lay in strata on the floor, flanked and piled with opened Greek texts minutely annotated in ink. Wacklein's interleaved *Æschylus* crossed the occupant's knees, every word of Greek submerged under references, while exquisitely tricked emendations filled every corner of unprinted space. A rich surface manure of unopened

bills, brown-paper parcels, press cuttings on every subject that was Greek or remotely Greek, including Greek Church and Modern Greek politics, had settled on the furniture. The floor was deep with scribbled paper, exercises that had been shown up and lost years previously, and, oddly enough, copies of the *Sporting Times*, whose pinkiness had faded with dust. Books lined the room, and the great Paris edition of the *Stephanus Thesaurus* threw a red splash on the wall. A door opened into a bedroom which served as library, while a third room seemed to be a huge wastepaper-basket.

It was a short time before Edward could separate the debris from their owner. Dr. Meleager had a pale drawn face, something between an early Christian ascetic and a tricky slow bowler. Youthful enthusiasm made the lip mobile, and behind gold-rimmed spectacles the blue, print-worn eyes twinkled like a pair of hawks mewed under glass but waiting to scour untracked plains of papyrus. Photographed fragments of MSS. on the table awaited discernment, containing perhaps some lost line of Euripides or new reading of the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, to which Dr. Meleager had devoted his life. With assumed surprise Dr. Meleager asked the reason of the intrusion, as though he were anywhere except in a College of students or atmosphere of approaching examinations.

‘Please do not leave any exercises here, for they will assuredly be lost,’ observed Dr. Meleager, watching Edward’s swollen note-book. Edward explained that he had come to hear a lecture. This produced a shrill laugh. ‘Lecture? Why, I haven’t lectured for years. If you want Latin, I know no Latin. I always use cribs and advise you to do the same.’ ‘We have come for Greek, sir,’ some one suggested, whereat his eyes twinkled. ‘Greek? I am still learning Greek myself. When I think of the late authors I have not read, it is enough to keep one in till Christmas.’ With a clear half-bantering voice, playful of a little stammer, he continued

to parry the searchers for knowledge with fanciful information.

‘I have been reading the Book of Wisdom, the most Pindaric in the Bible. I am rather busy now reading the newly discovered Herondas, whose writings I am informed are rather like those of the monosyllabic *Gyp*. I have the Dictionary-makers ahead and all the Grammarians and Rhetoricians, read by nobody except the Germans nowadays. It is terrible at my age to think that Maximus Tyrius is half-read. However, if you like, we can begin the *Agamemnon*. Steep yourself in Elizabethan before you translate Æschylus.’

Dr. Meleager divided the world into those who knew or knew not Greek. But he added by way of encouragement, ‘You know that my great purpose in life is to help those who love great poetry. I don’t mean the Professors and Examiners, but people who don’t pretend to know Greek and are ready to follow me out of the outer darkness of sciolists, where the gnashing of commendators is heard.’ And he laughed, pushing his little pump-shod feet on to a sofa.

Then he read the second Chorus of the *Agamemnon* as though it were something rich and rare, explaining the motifs which underlay the Greek, and how the changes in metre signified change in emotion and the arrival of different gods. ‘Why, Apollo and Dionysius could be traced by the very pattern of the scansion! Rather like the pattern on this dressing-gown!’ The groups of longs and shorts became notes of music under his suggestive wand, until, throwing himself on the piano, which supported a half-empty tankard of beer and a copy of Quain’s *Medical Dictionary*, he began to pick out, theme by theme, the long-lost music of Hellas. ‘Swinburne,’ he suddenly shouted, ‘is the only man living whose ear has lighted on secrets of Greek lyric which took me years of study. For instance: enter Heracles, and you get Dorian phrases marking heroism and self-control! Enter Dionysius, and hey! the Ionian

Glyconic,' and he tapped keys in illustration. 'Then the Pæonic, most moving of metres—say to yourselves—*Catherine of Aragon!*—*Canterbury Pilgrim!* Isn't it simple?'

Dr. Meleager paused, and one of the party introduced a suggestion from Dr. Verum. This roused him. 'There are three things the modern commentators do not understand in Greek: the effect of particles, the order of the words, and lastly the connection between underlying ideas in Greek poetry. They are always expecting the Greeks to share the modern vice of trying to be original, and complaining that they are copycats and plagiarists. The Greeks would disdain to use a new theme or new proverb in their literature. All their lyrics are subtle variations on the old.'

Dr. Meleager read a few lines of Æschylus. Suddenly he came upon an emendation with which he had replaced a gloss. With a shrug of his elegant shoulders he explained how glosses crept into texts, but that if you had studied the minds of the Alexandrine gloss-makers and dictionary-builders, you could guess the word the gloss had displaced. 'It is no use saying the phrase seems strained and leaving it. Read half Greek literature till you find the missing word: that is what I do.'

And the amazing lecture continued, Dr. Meleager sometimes refreshing himself with the emptied tankard of ale or a walk among the books in the next room. 'Remember that Æschylus builds dramas in the way Beethoven piles pillars of music. Don't regard the text of Æschylus as antiquated cuneiforms. Interpret his Persian play with Burton's *Arabian Nights*, and find the Flight into Egypt in the *Suppliants*. His Prometheus stealing the fire is the myth of Adam taking the apple, the forbidden property of the gods. And by the way, the order of emphasis in a Greek sentence is exactly the opposite to English. Nobody know that?'

Edward noted down this glowing material while Dr. Meleager returned to his piano. 'Enter Artemis and

Apollo! Let Pæonic trumpets blow! The Pæonic metre I call the Poacher, because it is the same as that jolly tune, "As me and my companions were setting of a snare." Do you remember? But these things only come with observation. Don't rely on editor's instinct. It was by astronomer-observation that Bentley detected the habits of Greek Anapæsts and Porson noticed certain practices peculiar in Greek Iambics. Now go and let me read my Quain in peace. I am sorry to say I have developed several of the symptoms of *Leucocythæmia*, a rather rare disease from the East, but I always said Bodley's was unhealthy. This part of the Backs should be dedicated to the Infernal Deities. I shall have to finish reading Shakespeare this term. It's bound to be one of the subjects set.

'But there are three things I want to see before I die: Tangier and Dan Leno and Pretty Polly. Greece the great desirable I have seen, that land of amethystine haze and twilight coffee. Oh, the icy Hades of the Cam!' And he shivered a little and withdrew with Quain's *Dictionary* into his bedroom. He did not reappear, and the party quietly decamped. Two hours had passed. . . .

Dr. Meleager lived and worked as though death precluded a colossal examination wherein the reading of all men would be tested, a Tripos set by the Trinity.

King's Dons were not as other Dons. They were remote and reserved except to Kingsmen. Compared to the Trinity Dons they were unsocial, and with one glorious exception unaddicted to Royalty. King's Dons had protested against the award of royal and loyal degrees by a snobbish Senate, which was as absurd as admitting successful generals and pushing politicians to the Academic purple. But even the O.B. had a feeling of independence, and when the unnecessary Order of Merit went to Trinity, Mr. Brownlow was understood to have refused it on the grounds that he was not an Old Marlburian.

CHAPTER X

KING'S INTELLECTUALS

EDWARD was stung to enthusiasm by his teachers. The Classics seemed to be the beginning and end of life. Life was anything but the mathematical or commercial or financial or political. The clerical state to which Edward dreamed he had been called grew attractive under Classical light. The infant Church had spoken and thought in Greek. The mediæval Church had made Latin the live language of the world. Plato's philosophy became Christian mysticism, and his laws the Catholic code, and his Republic the City of God upon earth. It was still realisable, but the Anglican Church must do her share to knit England into one Christian Communist system. . . . So much for dreaming. Meantime the Tripos loomed ahead. His mind became pervaded with the pylonic proportions of Æschylus, the clear and moralising radiance of Sophocles, or some piquant chorus ending of Euripides. Edward withdrew more into himself, until King's seemed totally withdrawn from the world. Outside, the Universe itself lay in terms of a University. The living were all undergraduates. The dead had merely graduated. Sometimes a white cloud bursting across the sky seemed like the bellying surplice of an Archangel hurrying to Chapel. And Edward imagined the mysterious Dominations and Powers carrying on research work in God's Labs.

Edward entered stride, never missing a lecture, nor shirking a Chapel, nor staying from Hall. Hall he grew to love as the great *sussitia*, the common meal by which

the College renewed and resealed her corporate life, like a survival of the mediæval Refectory. The hour of Hall had followed the clock through the day until it became a compromise betwixt short supper and high tea at seven-fifteen precisely. Twenty minutes sufficed the undergraduate appetite, but a dignified leisure was allowed to the Bachelors, while Dons took their gourmand's hour at the High Table. Conversation was natural and agreeable at the Fresher tables, decreasing in flavour and optimism with the second and third year benches, until it attained the suave cynicism of the Bachelors and eventually the tired stereotypes of the High Table. Few Dons understood each other's language, owing to the gulf between the Classics and Science. The men of Science could at least understand the talk of the Classical, but to the literary humanists the mathematical were incomprehensible, the chemists incomprehensible, and the political economists incomprehensible.

Only rumours and parodies of the Dons' conversation ever reached the lower ranks, but on one occasion the High Table was seen to yield Homeric laughter. By degrees the College ferreted out the cause. Mr. Tulson had been under discussion, and each colleague in turn had revealed or suggested some hitherto unknown or suspected defect in his physical person—artificial ankles, cork kidneys, horse-hair whiskers, bones loaned from the Professor of Anatomy, and so forth. Suddenly John Edward Tulson entered Hall amid intense silence. To clear the atmosphere, the Provost leaned forward and asked Mr. Tulson to try the savoury soup. 'Thank you, I am afraid I have no sense of taste,' he replied, amid a roar of amusement. It was the only thing his fellows had forgotten!

But as a rule they faced each other from their high-backed chairs, jesting little, oblivious of other Colleges and almost of their own. They were Fellows of King's. Their College was still the premier College, though shorn of ancient privilege. Surpassed numerically by Trinity

and John's and Pembroke, she retained Spain's proud consciousness among nations that she was not as others. Her attainment in the past overlooked the present. King's Dons were Dons indeed.

One of Edward's pleasures was the frequentation of younger Dons, who kept young by familiarity with Freshmen. Elected to the Simeon Society, Edward attended a meeting in the rooms of Mr. Gow, to hear a paper on the recently published work of Oscar Wilde called *De Profundis*. Discussion was invited. The room was filled with languid young gentlemen and their brisker elders. Edward was introduced to Adolphus Briggs, a good-looking young Freshman, who believed in the Sonnet to redeem modern Journalism. Briggs had survived the roughness of the public school as comfortably as a swallow caged with sparrows, but at King's he had found pinions. Already his Sonnets graced the *Cambridge Review* and the *Westminster Gazette*. 'You should send your poetry to the *Granta*,' Mr. Sherrard was saying. 'Is there any difference between the two Varsity papers?' 'The *Granta* is written by Dons for the amusement of undergraduates. The *Review* is edited by undergraduates for the instruction of Dons.' Mr. Lockson, a brilliant young History Don, was reading the paper. He was one of those perfectly uninspired Englishmen without genius or approach to the sublime, who by sheer ability and self-confidence build up talents the gods have not given them. He had taught himself English style and, what was more remarkable, a clear, arresting expression of speech. He had written defending the attitude of the Tibetan Lamas to Imperial and missionary aggression. Equally fluently he had explained the Greek mind and exposed the Ecclesiastical. He was feared intensely in Christian circles as responsible for the agnostic trend of King's. Jasper told Edward it was their duty to show that Churchmen were not afraid of him.

The Simeon Society, named in honour of an eminent

and pious Kingsman, was devoted to eclectic discussion. The term had already inspired papers on Baudelaire, the Celtic Renaissance, the Fifth Dimension. This last was a Classical joke at the Mathematicians, and the Mathematicians had responded by a paper on Anglican Hymns as edited by German Classical editors in A.D. 3000. Another paper had been read in the style of Charles Lamb on the One-Eyed Tout, which produced so much amusement that a Committee had been appointed to interview that familiar character, and had drawn up its proceedings with a minority report.

Edward was casually introduced to a short, baldish figure lying on the sofa. 'Mr. Stornington of King's—Baron Falco.'

Edward smelt something of a Chinese curio shop and something of decaying but not quite decayed fish. Perhaps it was imaginary, for odours vanished in the strangeness of the personality. Cold bluish eyes were focussed between huge antique silver-rimmed spectacles. Thin nervous hands, one with a Bishop's amethyst, played with some sheets written in garish inks. 'The Baron promises a paper on the Borgia,' somebody mentioned. The Baron leaned back and sighed. 'Oh for the rosy criminal rapture of a Cæsar Borgia! or the stark, blinding sanctity of a Francis Borgia! or the unscrupulous and magnificent sublimity of an Alexander the Sixth in these days! *Aut Lucullus aut Cæsar Borgia* is my motto.' Jasper approached the Baron, who appeared to have a Catholic soul, and Briggs lent attention. 'We can never forget that we are a Papal Foundation,' whispered Jasper; 'Alexander the Sixth's eyes would not have been wounded in our Chapel.' 'It would have been interesting to have had Cæsar as a Freshman here,' suggested Briggs. 'Yes, what possibilities!' agreed the Baron. 'Proctors found mysteriously murdered and Deans poisoned! but at least you would incur the privilege of pontifical Vespers, the only possible service for the Chapel.'

‘Then you have lived in Rome?’ asked Jasper. ‘I received Minor Orders in the Apostolic City,’ and the Baron closed his eyes with solemnity and scratched his skull where baldness had long swallowed any sign of tonsure. ‘But I preferred the life of a historian of the Renaissance, and besides I received and inherited my titles without any estate, alas!’ and he smiled with the resignation of a Duke without dowry. ‘But I have warred against ugliness. I have revealed the Borgia and patented deep-sea photography.’ ‘Yes we are hemmed by Ugliness,’ said Briggs; ‘after living at Cambridge I find a journey to London a positive pilgrimage of pain. I suppose you, sir, would like to travel like a Canterbury Pilgrim. Trains must be displeasing to you.’ ‘Well,’ said the Baron, ‘I always travel at night and in disguise, for my fellow-travellers are liable to be middle-class. I have schooled myself to see something beautiful in the nocturnal movement of a train lit with lamps and streaming with sparks through the night, but the best that can be said is that Bradshaw provides a constant schedule for suicide in most parts of the country.’ The company fell to discussing how to abolish Ugliness from life. Some suggested chloroforming the middle-aged. ‘Better the middle classes,’ said the Baron. ‘I can promise that when I feel middle-aged I shall dispose of myself. In the course of my investigations I have discovered the lost Borgia venom, which kills and leaves no trace.’ Eyes of admiration turned to the brilliant Baron. Jasper whispered shiveringly, ‘Minor Orders and mortal sin!’ But there was suppressed merriment when the Baron was seen adjusting a luxuriant chestnut wig.

Briggs proposed a society of night-raiders to burn down advertisement hoardings. The Baron chipped in about a Verbal Inquisition to root out Americanisms and proclaim by public decree words of true beauty. He offered to supply a number of neologisms from a private lexicon, which he had compiled for himself out of Greek

and Latin. 'I shall leave my most exquisite coinages to my friends.' The Baron, for a foreigner, spoke perfect English, though with the suspicion of a cheap boarding-house. But Edward could not doubt the Baron's titles and quarterings, especially as he showed the armorial trickings for his new book-plate.

'There you see my eponymous Falcon, argent-langued and upon a chief rouge. I had to draw it without the help of the College of Heralds. They are so wickedly uncharitable. Roman Catholics always are. They had the impertinence to ask for a fee.' Edward admired the blazonry and the Greek capitals in the motto. 'That's for the Emperor Palæologus,' recommenced the obliging Baron. 'He was a remote ancestor of my venerable grandmother the Duchess di San Catano, through whom I receive my title. I prefer a Byzantine connection to a Chicago stockyard or Jewish florist,' and he peered round the room with the indignation of the last of true barons. Edward ventured to ask the reason of the funny little hat with two tassels over his arms. The Baron choked with emotion. 'I am a clerk in Divine Orders, acolyth and exorcist,' and he pointed with his thumb through the yellow wig to the missing tonsure. 'But they cast me forth. I offered my indubitable vocation to the barbarous Scotch College. The Lord Pius the Second found them horrible when he was Legate in Scotland. Dr. Johnson was of a like opinion. I can confirm both Philosopher and Pope. I suffered their slimy circumambience for a year. They eat horse and do not reverence good blood. The Rector deliberately stole the manicure set that the Duchess gave me to avoid shaded nails and chewed chilblains when I served the altar of God. You have never met the Catholic Clergy, have you? Let me say that the Faith is gorgeous but the faithful are quite impossible.'

'My father is a priest of the English Church,' said Edward. The Baron trembled. 'My dear boy, believe me, he is invalid in Order, impotent in Absolution, and

inadequate in Transubstantiation. You must pardon me for speaking as an exact theologian.' 'I suppose you were born a Roman Catholic?' 'I was not always so,' replied the other. 'I made my submission to the Apostolic Stool late in life.' 'I sometimes wish I had been, but I feel I ought to stay in the Church where God placed me,' said Edward, who had learnt this answer from Jasper.

Mr. Gow was calling silence for the paper on *De Profundis*. The beauty of the prose was extolled, the sincerity of the writer admitted, and the savage punishment accorded by society deprecated. As the winy paragraphs were decanted, tears glistened in many eyes. The sorrow of the poet and his imprisonment were evoked by words more subtle than music, more potent than oratory. Edward listened with open mouth and clutching fingers. He knew nothing about Oscar Wilde, except vaguely as an Irish actor who had been sent to prison for *lese-majesty*. He was realising that English could be as beautiful as Greek. The Evangelical and the Catholic mingled in his prison threnody. The Gospel took a whiter light. All his life Edward had been told it was true. Now he learnt that it was beautiful, above all that the Mass was a passion-tragedy played without blood, and that the last survival of the Greek Chorus was the answering of Servitor to Priest. Thus were Rome and Greece blent in time! Edward sat still while words penetrated his brain like rushing wine, or passed out with the sound of many waters. . . .

There was a pause followed by a hysterical gurgle in the fireplace. The Baron had fainted! He was revived with salts which somebody had prudently brought. Under this influence he had a good deal to say. He spoke of Oscar as the protomartyr of the æsthetic movement. Then with a shoulder shrug, 'But Oscar was all talk and flash. He was no sinner. In a Borgian age he would have only designed doublets.' And the Baron drew himself up as though he owed the public prosecutor

a grudge for overlooking his own turpitudes. 'If I had been sent to gaol, my books would be translated by the million in Tartary instead of being remaindered in Scotland.' Jasper tried to soothe him by saying, 'Your book was an apologia for the Borgias, I believe?' 'Yes,' said the Baron acidly, 'and I found that the Saint of the family required much more apology than their Pope. But I have not lived in vain if I have shown Alexander as the greatest and most human of all the Papal Governors of Urb and Orb. It is absurd Oscar writing that Christ thought He could shoulder the sins of Alexander. Alexander's shoulders were broad enough, and besides, his fingers held the Keys.'

There was a mild discussion, and somebody remarked, 'You might as well pillory a man for lop-ears or for red hair. It would be more beneficial for the State to imprison men for spitting than for moral offences.' The Baron continued in a peculiar language of his own. 'There are only two modes of speech,' he said. 'Let your words be tyrianthine or coprolalian. Then you can sometimes make your point.' 'We are generally most punished for what we deserve least punishment,' said Mr. Gow. The Baron continued, 'We are certainly attacked for what we haven't done. It is ludicrous to suppose that Oscar did what he was imprisoned for. He had the temperament without the tendency. He was condemned on the evidence of perjured rapsCALLIONS. I myself have been recently pilloried by Father Robert Rolle in a novel, called, I think, *The Sensationalists*, for a crime of bourgeois vulgarity which I could never have contemplated.' There was a laugh. 'He accused me of keeping a woman in Paris!' Laughter did not prevent the Baron's anti-feminist gospel. 'Women are simply cows, and horrible cows too. I can smell them in any room they pass through. Catholic Theology is so right to make man the superior and perfected type. I am nervous alone with women. Once a publisher's wife had the audacity to turn out the light. I screamed

involuntarily, and was rescued fainting by her husband. Of course she never forgave me. Forgiveness is one of the distinguishing marks of men. Nature is feminine and God masculine. Nature never forgives.'

Edward felt repelled and fascinated, but he could not refuse to accompany the Baron through the Front Court. It was his first 'Roman Catholic,' and as an Ordinand he was dreadfully excited. To him it was like a man's first flirtation or a boy's first cigarette. He must *know*. So he asked, 'Isn't it wonderful having real Saints and miracles going on just like the Middle Ages?' The Baron, who had spent deliberate years disguising his taint of unaristocratic origin, replied, 'Yes, thank God for the Middle Ages, but their representatives are very middle-class now.' 'Do you know instances of living Saints?' asked Edward eagerly. 'Plenty. There is my grandmother the Duchess, an Irish priest in Hoxton, Father Kentigern of Hatfield, an Italian Friar with beautiful bleeding stigmata, and His Holiness now gloriously reigning, all more or less thaumaturgic. Sinners predominate in the rank and file, which makes the Church feel home-like. One can be orthodox without being a Pharisee, you know. My sins may be as scarlet as hyssop. Call me a Saddist but not a Sadducee; Sadducees were prototypes of these detestable Modernists.' 'What is a Saddist?' asked Edward.

'A Saddist,' said the other, 'is one who realises that Pain at its best is superior Pleasure, and Pleasure at its worst is only inferior Pain. Saddism is the philosophy of the senses, the sensation of contrast. The lowest form is the gourmand who prefers a good dinner with a procession of unemployed passing the window. On a higher plane Oscar passed through the pain of prison to achieve the exquisite joy of writing the *De Profundis*, sentences which I would gladly have written myself. Saddism is the sensual paradox.'

They walked slowly under the starlight, taking advantage of the late hour to tread the sacred turf unseen. As

they passed the statue of Henry the Sixth exhibiting his Papal Bull to the Head Porter as though pleading to be allowed within his own Foundation, the bells of Cambridge chimed the chorale of midnight. Lighted panes in Gibbs' Building glowed like white lanterns strung between Chapel and Hall. Gargoyle and pinnacle were swallowed in orgies of darkness. The unmooned sky inked out the Universe save for ten thousand pinpricks of silver. 'My constellation!' murmured the Baron, pointing upward; 'Cancer: for under Cancer I was born, and in Cancer my art is conceived. Believe me, Astrology, Heraldry and Alchemy are the three lost sciences, but I shall restore them to this horrible age. *Sapiens dominabitur astris.*'

'It sounds as mediæval to have a dominant star as having a patron saint or an old title,' said Edward; and with an unconscious mischievousness, 'Is it an English Peerage?' 'Oh no,' answered the Baron, 'it is much better than any title given for distilling lies or hops, or boring oil or the House of Commons, which I believe are four reasons for modern ennoblement. Mine was conferred by an Italian Bishop whose See carried the right. We happened to be in sight of the village called Falco, which accorded so charmingly with my English name of Peregrine that the Bishop suggested it on the spot. Anybody with Byzantine blood, he said, should carry a title. But the Scotch College were so jealous that I was turned out to starve on the streets. But now good-night! Remember me in your night prayers to your holy Founder.'

As the Baron disappeared through the gate, Edward was left alone with the spell of the darksome Chapel. Somewhere in that mountainous shadow lay the fossil past of England, stark and stratified amid the growth of reforming ages. It seemed unimaginable that laboratories and electrical machines surrounded thickly the dædal beauty of stonework cowering in the umbered dark. What if it were only the ark of antediluvian beliefs

cumbering the stream of modern discoveries? . . . Shivering souls had once seen eternity through those dead port-holes of glazed immensity. Once those stones were apocalyptic and alive. Now all was an architectural survival, a musical museum, a place of perfunctory prayer, a charnel for the occasional deposit of dead Dons.

CHAPTER XI

CAMBRIDGE SPIRITUALS

ANOTHER term passed, and like a rushing river work bore all his days away. There was little variation save in the new introductions which befell him in the delightful hour devoted to coffee after Hall. He had definitely settled for the Church and informed both his father and the Dean. The Dean told him that no College living would be vacant for twenty years, but his father promised him an unpaid Curacy. It covered his desire.

Edward conducted himself as a prospective Levite already. He attended unnecessary services in different churches of the town. He frequented the C.I.C.C.U.,¹ a Low Church widespread Society which invited young men to make public avowal of their private salvation, and the S.T.C.,² a smaller company devoted to the Sarum rite, who gathered in each other's rooms to sing Compline over a whiff of incense and College coffee. Edward veered High Church under Jasper as his spiritual bearward. He went to Low Mass at St. Clement's and to the Choral Eucharists which the S.T.C. negotiated in St. Giles' with infinite intrigue and fussiness. The red-letter day in that Society's history had been the appearance of the Master of Pembroke at a surreptitious service. While the University slept, he had worn a Roman vestment and sung Requiem for deceased members. Whatever this elegant act accomplished for the bliss of the dead, it had made the living very happy. In St. Giles' Edward found the Saint Graal. There he

¹ Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union.

² Sanctae Trinitatis Confraternitas.

met the Kiss of the King and the mystical gustation of God. His soul was enfolded by the mystical shadow which is brighter than cosmic light.

Edward also joined the Order of the White Alb, which practised austere standards. Apart from a personal purity worthy of Porters or Proctors, the members were under vow to join actively in the suppression of immoral resorts. Jasper had long had a café in the Station Road in view. They also practised the personal salving of lost and derelict daughters of God from the streets, and above all they challenged risky stories by leaving the room. Edward suffered agonies in the Reading-room during the recitation of the ignoble Limerick, 'There was an old person of Rheims,' but he left before the last line. Jasper sometimes met the last Saturday-night train from London, and distributed leaflets of the missions to be preached in St. Giles'. The Evangelicals were ensconced in Holy Trinity, a melancholy edifice, once a Catholic Mass-hostel, but white-washed and atrophied until shape and colour resembled a boiled rabbit. St. Clement's, in spite of its poky spire, was polished and liturgical within. The Anglo-Catholic ritual was carried out summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, in a toy sanctuary by the devoted and learned Father Goode, whose undergraduate admirers spoke of his scholastic power in awed terms. It was rumoured that Roman Cardinals secretly consulted him on the meaning of passages in St. Thomas Aquinas. He was the Grand Penitentiary of the Anglicans, referred to by High Churchmen from all corners of that Communion, over which Jasper boasted the sun never set. He could be seen, a crooked cassocked figure, hovering in a tiny churchyard between his tiny church and his tiny vicarage. Invisible folios of the Early Fathers had laden his shoulders, and he disdained not to bless Holy Water or hear Confessions for stricken undergraduates. He was famous for his penances, and like Mrs. Battle at Whist, always demanded the rigour of the game.

Father Goode suffered from his own austerities and from unsympathetic Bishops, but he had never flinched from his high and narrow tight-rope. Town and Gown passed him by. He was never asked to preach the University Sermon, but he gave addresses on the minutiae of Canon Law in a sing-song voice as high as his own doctrine. Jasper and Edward used to take copious notes, and one day Edward learnt that it was uncanonical for the clergy to marry. In Canon Law he was himself illegitimate.

Edward did not like to mention this point to his dear father, but frequently he described his advancing views. Canon Stornington wrote back in depreciation and mild protest. What was good enough for Charles Kingsley was good enough for him, and it was always left at that. Jasper's rooms became a second home to Edward. They were already an annexe to St. Giles', and many a terrified wight left them for his first Confession. Edward resisted this practice because his father denounced it as un-English and the accompaniment of un-English vice! Jasper burst into shrill laughter on hearing this, and took Edward every Saturday to see himself being 'scraped,' as he called the act of Confession in St. Giles'. 'Thank God King's is in the Lincoln Diocese,' said Jasper; 'our Bishop wears a mitre and jewelled gloves. Most Bishops prefer mittens to mitres. Our Bishop favours Confession, and as his subjects we are bound to comply.'

If King's Chapel symbolised the contemplative side, St. Giles' was the active memory in Edward's religion. It stood like a gaunt brick ark at the road-junction to Ely and Huntingdon, a picturesque and vulgar Tractarian Church. Bleak interior space was slashed with a gaudy rood-screen painted with red, blue and gold tendrils and mouldings. The Crucified with Mary and John were carven above. The modern windows attempted to heal the Reformation. Saint Anselm the Norman was linked with the American Bishop Seabury. Anglican

and Franciscan, schismatic and stigmatic were pushed into the same boat. Missions were held in St. Giles', on which occasions Edward joined sacerdotalists scurrying to get good seats. Father John the missionary was a stirring figure, tall, emaciated and priest-like, as he stood with coarse rope-fastened cassock on a kitchen table under the Rood. He belonged to the Fathers of the Divine Blood, a religious community in the London slums, which Jasper and his friends hoped to join. In the monastic economy the rope served equally for braces and discipline, and Father John was fond of working himself to sermon pitch like Lacordaire by means of a mild scourging. His shaven head and hobbled boots symbolised that he was a defiant Christian Socialist, always seeing red. The subjects of his mission were startling, for each was tacked to one of the Commandments:—

‘MISSION OF THE DIVINE BLOOD

‘*Wednesday Evening.*

‘*The Red Flag—Thou shalt not steal!*’ (This was an ingenious adaptation of the Marxian doctrine that Property was really theft from God’s poor.)

‘*Thursday Evening.*

‘*The Holy Blood—Thou shalt do no murder!*’ (This was a fierce attack on the terrible sin of deicide, applicable not only to the Jews, but to all professed Christians who crucified their Lord afresh.)

‘*Friday Evening.*

‘*The Scarlet Woman—Thou shalt not commit Adultery!*’ (This was a passionate protest against the wrongs and woes done to the women of the streets.)

This last address most affected Edward. Father John wrung his heart with denunciations of the system underlying, under-draining and under-rotting English civilisation. Something was terribly wrong. Men were terribly to blame as men, and an uneasy tremor, though not of actual guilt, passed through the well-meaning youths,

who were probably more interested in copes than petticoats, and drew deeper thrills from a Bishop in mitre than a Prima Donna. 'One prostitute is sufficient to damn a universe!' cried Father John. 'Once Heaven reeled with the fall of angels. One fallen woman should convulse the solar system. We talk of fallen women, fallen angels, and even fallen priests, but I am going to talk of fallen men, and every man who contributes one half-crown to this iniquitous traffic is a fallen man.'

Turning gentler, the preacher began describing the Magdalene and the Christ. Edward had never visioned her before like a street-walker. The Fathers of the Holy Blood were famous for up-to-date sermons, and Father John imaged a London prostitute emptying her last drops of Paris scent over the tired feet of a tramp, whom she loved alone among men, because he saw the imprisoned soul in her demon-haunted body. Edward was converted head over heels to the Catholic idea, to root and branch. St. Giles' no longer seemed an esoteric little ark of ministering Ritualists. This gaudy flowerage of brick and paint was part of a tremendous growth, whose roots coiled round the modern world. One great root embraced the political, for 'A Catholic must be a Socialist!' Father John cried aloud. Another root touched art and literature, Gothic architecture and the beauties of the liturgy. Trade and professions were once embraced by mediæval Guilds, and Father John explained how the Guild system could save England from the industrial horror, if masters and apprentices, like monks and novices, made their trade a religious community and dedicated their Trades Unions to sacred symbols. Ironsmelters and Ironmongers could take the Nails of the Passion for symbol, the Undertakers' Union the Holy Shroud, Woodfitters and Turners St. Joseph's saw. The women of the street deserved the pity and protection which was allowed them in the Middle Ages, with St. Mary Magdalene and the box of alabaster as their symbols. Their patroness placed

them direct at the foot of the Cross. Their bodies knew the *Via Dolorosa* of the streets. They had access to Calvary. Too well might they say, 'Our flesh is meat indeed. . . .'

Edward felt faint with intensity. The painted Rood above the preacher seemed to bleed as he spoke. It was Friday, and he decided to go to Confession on the Saturday night. The concluding sermon on the leaflet read :—

'*Saturday Evening.*

'*The Red Flame of Purgatory—Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour !*'

Father John ingeniously worked from the proverb, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. Not only should no false witness be countenanced against the dead, but prayers should be said for their good estate in Purgatory. Purgatory he proved Scripturally by the famous Lazarine dilemma. Where was Lazarus when Our Lord recalled him from the dead ? Not in Heaven, for it would have been cruel to have brought him back to earth. Not in Hell, for he was beloved of the Christ. Therefore there must be some half-way house. Was it more pleasing to God to commemorate the imaginary virtues of the dead, or to pray for their sins ?

Edward stole shyly into the Lady Chapel, where he remained immersed in thought of his own wickedness. Father John was sitting in a large Queen Anne chair, while Jasper talked wildly into his ear. Edward recalled Jasper's recommendations of open Confessional in contrast to the Roman secrecy. His thoughts came back to the story Jasper had told him of the first Confession heard in the early days of the Oxford Movement : how an elderly spinster offered her person for the experiment and was conducted to the top room of the clergy-house, which was then locked and the blinds drawn. As the amateur confessor approached, he was startled to hear the drumming of her heels on the floor. The unhappy lady had gone into a fit ! Edward could not

get the story out of his head, and wondered whether he also would faint and be carried out. . . .

Jasper rose and pointed him out to the Father Confessor. Edward was seized with giggles and a desire for sal-volatile as he struggled to his knees, which were immediately seized with pins and needles. 'I am so sorry I have never been to Confession before,' he began. Father John pricked his ears to receive this virgin soul. 'Tell me simply all the tombstones of sin lying on your conscience. Then I will ask you a few questions.'

With a choking voice Edward revealed the general grossness and lack of grace in his unshriven life. Father John listened with a doctor's patience. 'Nothing else that troubles you?' 'I have forgotten, Father.' 'Have you ever gambled?' 'No!' Edward answered firmly. 'Not even lotteries or sweepstakes?' asked Father John kindly. Edward looked through the little windows into his heart. He knew that it is no use lying to lawyer or doctor or priest. 'Yes of course; I had forgotten. I won the Derby favourite in the College sweep, but it went to the St. Giles' choir fund.' Father John murmured, 'Venial sin, venal payment,' and with a final probe, 'My son, have you been clean before God with women?' Edward trembled. Since the terrible sermon on Friday he had felt a new responsibility upon his manhood. Every woman who perished in the Babylonian sewer left her blood upon his doorpost. Edward was too alarmed to reply. He realised Veronica's position now. Indirectly and mystically, certainly it might be due to him. Because men were men, women were eaten alive in the quicklime of prostitution. Veronica was already at the edge of the pit. Had not his own evil thoughts dragged her away from safe moorage? His thoughts had been impure jackals skulking round her soul. To Father John's professional pinprick the unsavoury bubble burst. He confessed affection and desire for Veronica, how he had lifted her once in his arms, how in imagination he had kissed her hands and feet and mouth, the very postern-

gate of sin, and how he was always dreaming of returning to marry her like a foreign prince. 'I am afraid you suffer from a stained imagination,' said the Confessor. 'You never really touched her, did you?' 'No, not for three years, but she is in great jeopardy now. I have seen her with men in Cambridge. I feel she is on my soul.' 'Then you must try and find her and say comfortable words to her. Is she a Church girl?' 'Yes, her aunt sweeps my father's church.' 'Well, do what you can to save her, but the Church does not hold you responsible except for your intent in lust. In fact you are not her seducer. Say for your penance the Penitential Psalms on your knees once a week until Christmas,' and he repeated the Absolutionary formula: 'Go in peace, my son, you are now as you were after baptism.' It was sublime. Hell seemed to have yawned and closed below while Heaven opened above. A serene emotion touched Edward, and he fumbled in his pocket for that gold sovereign which he had imaginatively promised to so many funds. Now was the time to dis-embarrass himself of the root of evil on the top of Evil itself. He slipped it into the brawny palm of Father John, who rejected it like a bad penny. 'No, no, no! We cannot take money in the Confessional. It would be simony. Keep it for the next collection. Good-night!'

Edward left St. Giles' as a convalescent leaves hospital. He staggered down the road past Magdalene College. Tall brick chimneys sentinelled the night. A heraldic pelican looked uncomfortably from its pediment. He passed a beautiful grille and the transriverine gate where the masters of Magdalene took barge. The river ran unseen underfoot. His sins seemed floating away with the garbage of Cambridge into the sea. Outside St. Clement's he remembered Father Goode and all his canonical austerities and raised his cap. The little Round Church of the Crusaders bobbed to him at the corner, but the tower of St. John's seemed squarely

elephantine and hostile, while the Johnian worthies ensconced round the immense Chapel, apparently under the superintendence of Madame Tussaud, took glum stock of the night. Edward remembered Jasper's fierce condemnation of the College, which had torn down its Catholic Chapel in recent times and erected this vain-glorious Protestant pile in its stead. Colleges like John's and Pembroke, which razed their ancient houses of prayer, were accursed.

But the red crumbling brick soothed him. The muffled Evangelist seemed to bless him from his stone sentry-box over the closed gates. . . . Trinity Street was redolent with the bindings of old books and the breath of sleeping confectioners. In the moon-lit space between Caius, the Corinthian-pillared Senate House and Great St. Mary's, the mighty bell tongued the hour. Beyond loomed the screen and Chapel of Kings like a hanging garden of Babylon, or the billiard-table of the gods, or an Olympian sow bellying to the sky, like anything the elephantiasis of the imagination could coin.

St. Mary's was still striking eleven sonorously as Edward rang the night bell. On the cobbles Jasper joined him running. 'Doesn't it feel luscious being shriven, something like bathing in jam and not feeling sticky afterwards?' The little trap-door opened and the two friends entered. Edward wanted to work, but Jasper remembered that the Simeon Society was in session. Professor Boggart of Trinity was reading a paper on the Inexistence of God. Jasper asserted it was their duty to strengthen the Christian opposition.

Professor Boggart was one of the Trinity intellectuals with the run of King's, being regarded as the prophet of Agnosticism. His life was passed hovering between the becoming and the unbecoming in a philosophic sense. With huge irreverent head poked upon Presbyterian shoulders he stood twisting Hegelian abstractions into fine-spun springes for the woodcock souls of undergraduates. His thought was as clear and taut as an

acrobat on the tight-rope, though his external slouch and gait were reminiscent of village idiocy. His brain seemed more salient than his saliva. Edward listened awestruck, wondering if Christendom held one champion to catch Professor Boggart slipping about like a genial eel in the realm of the intangible. Occasional sentences stuck in Edward's mind. 'Knowledge I alone hold is a real belief.' 'Belief is only true when it stands in correspondence to a fact. Well, but what is the fact about facts, and what are we to believe about belief?' Edward was fatuously bewildered, for it followed in discussion that neither Time nor Space nor God, who is Time impinged upon Space, stood in any particular correspondence to facts, and were therefore unreal. What was Time itself? was inquired.

And the poet Adolphus Briggs answered in a deep voice from the coal-scuttle on which he was poised, 'Time is the moving shadow of Eternity.' Professor Boggart would not define Time. There was no proof that even a shadow existed, much less that it moved. The hypothesis of God was not necessary to the Universe. God was a stagnant shadow on the minds of men, who hoped to creep under it out of Time into what was called Life Everlasting, a contradiction in terms. 'We are not immortal, because the unendingness of our lives is not an unending duration in time!'

That seemed to settle it. There was subdued and sophisticated applause as the Professor flopped down beside the O.B. Those who had understood least made most sound. Then a quiet scholar rose and dissected the Professor. 'That 's Edge,' whispered Jasper. 'He has been reading for a Fellowship.' Edge was a Bachelor with a splendid record in scholarship, and he was the spearhead of the High Church. His round white face concealed a quick petulant mouth and humorously serious eyes. He spoke of probabilities as the brickwork which made up the wall of certitude. There was nothing more certain than probability, he need not add that

there was nothing so probable as certainty, but nobody could be too certain, even the Professor, that the in-existence of God was correlative to the existence, say, of a Fellow of Trinity. Scepticism was suicidal. It was perfectly possible to believe what we had no knowledge of. It was the function of belief in the sense of Faith to believe what it could not understand. He derived the existence of God from the image of God supplied by his Conscience. The Professor and others interrupted. To them Conscience was an assumption that could not be entertained as an intellectual process. There was a jabber of voices. 'What is Conscience?' 'The Hegelisation of a policeman,' suggested one. 'The Dean!' shouted another, and Edge sat down amid laughter. But he had saved Edward's faith.

In the confusion the O.B. had risen and waddled into the centre of the room. He could not allow a Trinity lion to roar so effectively in King's. He leaped to the opposite extreme and brushed aside Professor Boggart's silvery cobweb—the result of the immature thinking and matured port at Trinity, he suggested. They were still tyros compared to the Greeks, who alone had appreciated the Real and the Ideal at their highest, but it had remained for the incomparable Middle Ages, the study of which he had introduced into the modern Cambridge course, to find the meeting of the Real and the Ideal. It lay in Transubstantiation! The word was intended for effect and fell like a stone into a pond. Edge shouted an excited cheer. Jasper made the sign of the Cross, but the O.B. only took an Icarian somersault from the Empyrean. He was taking the floor, and all else was forgotten! Forgotten was Professor Boggart, forgotten was Time and Space, forgotten the Divine! He held the floor with a torrent of personal reminiscences. He retailed what the ex-Queen of Naples had said to him the only time they met. And how once he and George Curzon had travelled through Italy together and been taken for father and son, and how Victor Hugo

had praised their good looks, whereat Professor Boggart gave a snort into his claret, and drawing the liquid through his metaphysical throat, gulped and spluttered, and rushed from the room. . . . Down the stairs and across the Court the huge and winy laughter of the sage could be heard while the Simeon Society dissolved for the evening. His last paradoxes were delivered in the Front Court: 'The Absolute is not God. The Absolute is a constellation of eternal lovers, for personality can survive though there is no God. I love the Church of England, much as I hate Christianity. Such a mess in the Church, but look at the mess in the Universe.' And he went his way, backing himself to the houses as though afraid of empty spaces. His way of walking was attributed to the spiral staircase on which he lived. Edge followed, trying to catch his last arrows. 'Is it really all chaos?' asked Edward. 'In Philosophy yes,' said Edge, 'but there is the Catholic system, God's way for us to help Him out of His own mess, you know.'

CHAPTER XII

GHOST-TIME AND SUMMER-TIME

RETURNING a second-year man, Edward felt as permanent as a Chapel pinnacle, and as familiar with the old stones as one of the decrepit Evergreens who served less fresh greens in Hall, or limped with trays of food from the Buttery.

Edward was rowing for the College in the Lent boat. Every night he dined at the soupless training table, and was sent by Cox coffeeless to bed. The heavy shadow of the Tripos had advanced a year upon the dial, and the dissipating round of lectures was abated as he turned to more strenuous studies in his own room. No man ever passed a Tripos by attending lectures, or by listening to an editor reading sentences and snippets of his own book aloud. Then there were new Classical authors in silver Latin and late Greek, all of whom bore ominous possibility of being set for the Tripos: Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Statius' *Silvae*, Theophrastus' *Characters*, the *Mimes* of Herondas. For these latter he frequented the delectable Dr. Meleager.

There was one great difference between Dr. Meleager and other Cambridge scholars. They went to the Germans for their texts and philosophies and philologies. But the Germans came to Dr. Meleager. He was immovable in King's, seldom leaving his rooms unless to see a surreptitious cricket match at Lord's or to wander down the Newmarket Road on the chance of seeing 'Pretty Polly.' Sometimes he went into the Fellows' Gardens with a threatening axe, but whether to fell ornamental shrubs or to practise the stroke of Clytem-

næstra in the bath-scene of the *Agamemnon* was not revealed. One evening Edward found him painting the carved stone inside his window-mullions with hectic dispersion of red paint. No doubt he was following some rediscovered cue in Greek Art. On his table was an open Bible, wherein he had marked cross-references between Scripture and Greek literature. 'It's all in *Æschylus*,' murmured Dr. Meleager between brushfuls. 'Prometheus is the theme of the New Testament and the *Oresteia* is the Old; vengeance, horror, tribal destiny, insane pride against the gods, and final Nemesis. Remember that Christ was crucified in the Caucasus. You remember Prometheus with the eagle beside him.' Edward's thought flitted to the Rood in St. Giles', and for a moment he guessed why St. John was personified as an eagle. Did everything in legend and religion fit? Was all the pagan counterfeit of the Christian? Dr. Meleager continued painting. 'The inside coating ought to be taken from nature like the under-red of a mushroom. No Cambridge upholsterer has ever understood colour, because they live in a cold, soupy Hades. But reds are important. Never use bright red except in the sun. Under the Cambridge sky reds must be the red of faded morocco or dead roses or spilled port. By the way, there will be no more lectures this term. The Regius Professor of Greek is mortal and I must prepare my Prælection for the Senate House.'

'What subject are you taking, sir?' asked Edward.

'The second Chorus of the *Agamemnon*.'

'Have you taken a long time?'

'For ten years I have been preparing,' said Dr. Meleager solemnly. 'The fall of *Agamemnon* was worked out by *Æschylus* far more subtly than the fall of Adam by the theologians. His fall was parallel to that of Paris. From *Ploutos* or Prosperity he passed to *Koros*, which is Satiety, and landed him in *Hybris* or Insulting Pride. *Elpis* and *Thrasos*, Hope and Boldness, led him to *Atee* or Inspired Wilfulness, using *Peitho* or Persuasion as her

agent provocateur. 'Take these, take the metres, build up a Beethoven sonata, and you have a chorus of Æschylus.'

All was grist that came to Edward's greedy mill. He swallowed pagan theology, agnostic casuistry and modern ritualism with cheerful gullibility. It was all new and interesting, and seemed to fit. Edge had stated in full session of the S.T.C. that the Christians were really the true Agnostics. Jasper told him that only a Greek could be High Churchman, that Low Churchmen were Aristotelians and High were Platonists. Jasper's rooms became a sanctuary or club to Edward. Any evening that he was not working or frequenting some form of religious amusement in the town he sat under the high roofs of King's in those rooms, which were liable to be devoted equally to Synod or Séance. A guest might be called to discuss the *via media* in theology or act as a medium. One night he was discussing the lamentable attitude of the Bishop of London towards incense, when an undergraduate entered hurriedly and gave Jasper a note. Jasper read it and leaped to his feet. 'Will you men stand by me?' he cried, toying the air with the paper. Both agreed hastily. 'Well, the most extraordinary things are happening in Corpus. There is a ghost there, quiescent for years, but this term appearing and disturbing a brother of ours. Things have reached a crisis and there is nothing left but to exorcise it.'

'Exorcism?' his companions echoed. It sounded like one of those illegal services which Bishops were busy forbidding. 'Yes, and Exorcism is a Church privilege. Indeed, I wonder what Nonconformists do when they see a ghost.' Jasper went on to give them several blanket-crisping instances of Exorcism as performed by modern priests.

'It is absurd to think that we deal with good spirits entirely. We are told to wage war against spirits of wickedness. We must be ready to meet the Evil One if necessary.' 'In Cambridge?' queried Edward. 'Yes!'

The new-comer described how the occupant of the haunted rooms in Corpus was reduced to such a state of nerves that he could no longer do any work. Harassing things were taking place. A face was seen at the window from the Old Court after the door had been sported and the room left empty. Footsteps were heard in one room while the occupant slept in the other. It was a case for immediate action. But what was to be done? It was no use appealing to the Tutor or sending for the College Porter. The rooms always had a bad record. Originally they formed part of Archbishop Parker's suite. The tradition was that in the eighteenth century a Don had committed suicide before preaching the University Sermon, and they had been haunted ever since. The last occupant, a Tutor of the College, had crawled out on his hands and knees and the rooms were officially closed. This term they were opened, with this result.

Jasper met the occasion. 'I am going to take it by the throat. We will go round immediately.' He opened a cupboard disclosing a temporary altar, from the tabernacle of which he drew a phial of Holy Water. 'Father Goode's brew,' he muttered grimly. 'We will try a little Cam water on the Devil,' he added, with a nervous laugh to reassure his companions, whose eagerness was overclouded by thought. The three descended the stone stairs together. In the Great Court the College clock took them to task. 'Hurry! there's not a moment to be lost if we are going to get into Corpus before ten o'clock,' said Jasper, and started running like a hare, followed by his two acolytes. They sprinted through the side door down the King's Parade, throwing themselves into Corpus at the last stroke of ten. For a moment they leaned against the stonework for breath. The Corpus man led them slowly toward the ill-omened rooms in a corner of the Old Court, overhung with cloistral ivy. Creaky staircases opened into cupboard-rooms with pendulous cobwebbed ceilings. This corner of Cambridge was ancient even amid ancientry. A pale

student appeared at the door and said, 'I do not want to stay, but if only you could do something.' Jasper became professional. 'In these cases we can only use the mediums of Exorcism which Christ bequeathed to His Holy Church. He rebuked Satan and exorcised demons out of the swine.' They entered the rooms, and the Corpus man, a young Ordinand of singular piety, unfurled a large Crucifix from the folds of his gown. Jasper lifted and thrust the Emblem vaguely into the shadowy atmosphere. There was no light except the tiny twinkling fire, fitter to warm the lattice rats than to seethe a student's wits. The Corpus man closed the doors, and each took position near Jasper, who began reciting Litanies to the Saints in the same sing-song monotony, thought Edward, with which Lady Trywilliam would receive a line of guests :—

'Saint Francis, pray-for-us !'
 'Saint Dominick, pray-for-us !'
 'Saint Ignatius, pray-for-us !'

And the High Anglican leaders were invoked :—

'Blessed John Keble, pray-for-us !'
 'Blessed Dr. Pusey, pray-for-us !'
 'Blessed Father Mackonochie, pray-for-us !'

The holy Founders of the Cambridge Colleges were summoned equally: Henry the Sixth, Lady Margaret, Bishop Alcock. Some holy patriarchs were thrown in as ballast: Moses the subduer of the magicians, Job the afflicted of the Evil One, Elijah the hammer of Baal.

Jasper knew his ground. A pause followed, devoted to mental prayer, during which Edward felt something was not right with his liturgical liver. He was seized with a desire for fantastic merriment. He found himself continually repeating the old nursery rhyme under his breath :—

'Shadrach, shake the bed !
 Meshach, make the bed !
 And Abednego—into bed we go !'

He was bursting with giggles, but with a prayer for reverence he faced the dark and empty room. He still foresaw a quiet evening, and that the tenant would soon be comfortably reading for his examinations. It was not so. A sudden cry burst from Jasper, 'Hold up my arms, for I am sure that *it* is here!' Since he said so, *it* surely was!

His companions upheld his elbows as Aaron and Hur once supported the aching Moses. They prayed and peered into the darkness, which remained still with that terrible stillness of once-accursed places. Again spoke Jasper, 'I feel *it* is watching me.' This was awful. 'Push me slowly forward, but do not get in front of the Crucifix for a minute or you will be lost.' His anxious assistants pushed him forward. Edward felt Jasper's muscles tighten. '*It* is pulling me! Hold me tight or the Crucifix will be pulled out of my hands.' Unmistakable pressure had commenced. In vain Edward tried to steady his friend, who seemed dragged by some unholy lodestar into the opposite corner. 'Push me right into the foul fiend,' moaned Jasper. 'Limb of Satan, avaunt in the name of the All Holy!' And they crashed together on the old panelling.

The next words came like a sigh of relief. 'Well, it's gone right through,' and the exhausted three sat down and poked the dying fire into flicker. 'And I forgot the Holy Water after all,' remarked Jasper, as they compared notes. Taking the little flask in his pocket he began to sprinkle the room. Some drops fell in the fireplace, for Edward caught the sound of a hiss. It was like the hiss of a demon! Jasper must have thought so too, for he shot to attention and pointed to the open doorway of the bedroom. '*It*'s back again in there!' and without waiting for his acolytes he sprang forward. It was not a successful manœuvre, for a second later he was thrown out of the bedroom and stricken to the floor. . . . His companions sank to their knees. It was terrible, and the seconds passed like pricks of pain.

Edward tried to recite the Lord's Prayer, but found to his horror that he had forgotten the last half. Again he began and again he stuck. He felt that if he could not complete the prayer, Good would be vanquished by Evil. He tried backwards and the petitions formed in his brain. Suddenly a grim memory rose from childhood. Had not Mrs. Judbud averred that if anybody said the Lord's Prayer backwards at midnight the Devil would appear? He was half-way through backwards, and it must be dangerously near midnight. He felt as though he were hanging over a precipice. . . . The fire flamed. His companion had clasped the Crucifix. Jasper was crawling on the floor. On the carpet the Holy Water lay like medicine from an overturned bottle. The stillness of the room seemed suffocated with spiritual beings. He felt like a fly embalmed in amber under the triple deep of the sea. The light was like imprisoned light cut off from dead stars. He had a dead feeling. He was sorry that so much that was pleasant had come to an utter end: the old days at the Rectory, father and mother dear, Julius and the Manor Hall, the life at King's. He would never have to wrestle with the Tripos now. What would they do if he failed to appear in the Lent boat on the morrow? The Chapel passed his optical film like an enormous backwater over which broke waves of unformed spirits smiting the pinnacles before they dispersed into strange spray. It was a good thing he had made his first Confession. He had only one regret. . . . He would like to get Veronica safe home before night fell, but it was becoming night now, night . . . crash . . . crash . . . something was happening outside his skull. . . . Crash again! and the door of the room was broken open amid floods of light and cries of feverishly excited undergraduates outside. Their listening impatience had mastered the fear of the occult. The crowd had grown until courageous boots had kicked in the door. The necromancers were lifted to their feet and warmly patted on the back. . . . 'Where

is the ghost? Does he bite?’ Jasper could only mutter, ‘*It* is ascended into the rooms above.’ The crowd urged him to go for *it* again. Jasper, nothing loth, continued the eerie work and started up a tiny flight of stairs with Edward and his companion as solemnly as a Vicar and his Churchwardens. An attic door was pressed open and they entered, while the tramp of feet shook the building. A medical student was found reading, unconscious of the terrors in the rooms below. His scant apartment was decorated with a few pipes, a human skull like a fossilised bladder and some of those medical text-books whose illustrations seem taken from Dante’s *Inferno*. The medico looked over his spectacles and mistook them for a religious raid. The previous term the Evangelicals had prayed on his threshold on a portable mat. This looked like a sacerdotal attempt to flush his medicinal soul. He had expressed atheism as a Fresher, and had never been left in peace. He rose and politely stated his views. ‘Then the ghost is bound to be here!’ cried Jasper. ‘I know *it* is! I see *it* over in that corner!’ and he blindly waved the sacred Emblem. A murmur of harrowed admiration swept the callow ranks crowding the door. The medico, by name Palathiel Mustchin, rose and briefly proclaimed the nullity of the spirit world. ‘Then he started angrily forward. ‘Don’t get in front,’ gasped Jasper. Mr. Mustchin collapsed into the corner with a thin scream. Everybody pressed for an explanation. Mr. Mustchin looked up with a petrified stare. ‘How cold *it* is. *It*’s icy, icy cold, colder than the Labs!’

People really became frightened. This conversion on the road to Damnation rather than Damascus was too much for Edward. It proved the final glut of horror for the evening. He was wide awake, but he felt he would very soon be disentangled of his body. Everything people said he seemed to have heard said before. He had the sense of knowing what was coming next. He knew that the Corpus man would feebly syringe the

corner with the dregs of the Holy Water. He knew that Jasper would stand with raised Crucifix in one hand, while he stroked Mr. Mustchin's brow. From below came the crashing of blows on the panels as rowing men dissected the partitions in search of the skeleton whose hidden presence reason made obvious. Edward knew that something terrible would soon befall him. Turning round, he slipped into the Old Court . . . before *it* came!

The night was amazingly still. The mullions slept under their ivy and a mellow light mulled the crystal panes. Over the low roof rose the flint-woven Saxon tower of St. Benet, oldest of Cambridge time-marks. A death-frost held the sky like a congealed and crooked cobweb. Grey, glittering and glacial, the stars hung in clutches and clusters, like gorgeous but rather gawky jewellery! As a child Edward had been troubled by the arrangement of the constellations. Had they shown the perfect pattern of pearl ropes or diamond tiaras, he could have looked with pleasure into the night sky, but he could not bear their untidiness. He had a feeling that they had been created in a hurry and might collapse in a hurry. They looked like colossal molecules scattering space with meaningless crystallisation. But they counter-terrified his local fright. He made his way back, and to his real relief stood again on the Regalian turf with a solid screen of stone between him and whatever *it* was. He steadied himself with another long look upward. The Big Bear looked like a nice homely saucepan with a bent handle. The Little Bear revolved on its head, while the immobile Pole Star like a silver stud fastened the tip of its tail to Space. There was Cassiopeia like a collapsible deck-chair, and to the north Vega, the refulgent lodestar in the Lyre, toward which the whole world moves a million miles daily, a consoling thought to Edward, who had reassured himself—when an entirely different anxiety passed into his mind. He was supposed to be training for the Lent races on the river.

He stole bedward by circuit, hoping that neither Cox nor Coach would see him.

He rose to resume the life of training, the run before breakfast, followed by courses on the river and segregated Halls interspiced with weighing, tubbing, daily revilement and nocturnal exhaustion, with a misery at heart. What if he were damned? The Lents began the following week. But at nights he could not sleep. The scene in Corpus returned to him. In vain he imagined that he was rowing and tried to count the strokes necessary to send himself off drowsing. Something in his room would not let him escape. An intangible uncanniness clung to him like the smell of a burning house. At last he could stand *it* no longer, and rushed into the room below for companionship. Briggs with some friends was sitting over a fire talking. Edward did not like to say that he was frightened by ghosts, so he said that he had rowing cramp. Might he warm himself at their fire? They rose a little surprised from their secret brew of cocoa, the strong drink of Kingsmen. Briggs drew his fingers through hair that looked hyacinthine in the glow, and continued to declaim Tudor poetry. He turned humorously to Edward.

‘Let me introduce you—Mr. Clapley of Trinity—Mr. Canard of King’s—Mr. Stornington of King’s.’

Mr. Clapley was a tallish bent withe of a man, with a little goatish beard and a wailing voice. His attitude spelt admiration for his own laziness. His spectacled eyes signalled a gentle indifference to the ideals and sentiments of others, but he looked as though he might write biographies of children’s pets or monograph Grace Darling and the Prince Consort in *Good Words*. They looked pitifully at the galley slave. Mr. Canard commenced, ‘I never could see why people wish to practise being mediæval convicts.’

Briggs answered, ‘I trace this rowing further back. It must have been a form of river worship: Camus the god and oarsmen his victims. All our national sports,

if really investigated, will be found to have a religious significance.' Edward recognised the Gospel of the *Silver Apple*.

'Cricket, I suppose,' continued Mr. Clapley, 'was originally a pastoral rite in English folk religion. Three stumps for the Trinity.'

'And the cricket ball symbolising the wicked world,' laughed Briggs. 'Maiden overs in honour of the Maiden Mother. Umpires' white overcoats are rudimentary surplices. But who are the Eleven?'

'Oh, the Eleven who went up to Heaven,' piped Mr. Clapley, looking like a Secretary Bird. Edward drank his cocoa, delighting in the play of these boyish giants. He was almost ashamed to return to bed, and apologised for being in a College boat.

'Religious Englishmen should play cricket,' said Mr. Clapley. 'I play the wicked game of croquet.' 'My grandfather,' said Edward, 'played cricket in a top hat.' 'Are you sure it was not a bowler hat?' drawled Mr. Canard. The party broke up at the first bad pun. . . . For a week Edward was shaky on his stretcher, and the Coach, knowing it was too late to change the crew, was as wrathful as Achilles. Four and Six in the boat were expected to perform the heavy work, and Edward rowed Four in the first College boat. The Cam, with its curves and twists, is the hell of rowers and paradise of Coxes. Some fatuity of Fate dropped a crooked river through Cambridge. England is full of streaks of wide and strait racing water that no oarage of Eights ever whitens! While the Cam recalls Mark Twain's description of the particular street in Damascus called Strait as something resembling a crooked corkscrew! Edward thought the crookedness of the Cam as unnecessary as the disorder in the constellations, but it had evolved the Bumping Race.

Coach, Cox and Captain worked and worried the crews to their last ounce. Throughout practice one phrase was dinned into their ears, 'Give her ten! Give

her ten ! ' the technical formula urging a dying crew to give ten moribund strokes. But the cry came too often. It was ' Give her ten ! ' in the Ditch by way of getting the boat going. In the Gut it was necessary to ' give her ten ' in order to get round Grassy, and the Plough demanded ten. During the Long Reach it was customary to ' give her ten ' at Glass-Houses, and ten were required as a matter of honour to bring her into the Railway Bridge. The phrase staled like all recurrent spurs, and the wearied crew gave their tens with quite unnoticeable effect. In his dreams Edward heard the Coach shouting to ' give her ten,' and even visioned the Deity as a celestial rowing Coach directing mortals upon the tiny turbulent trough of life from some Milky Way of a tow-path. After all, thought Edward, He did give them ten once from Sinai !

No mental process can assuage the icy misery of the Lents. Half-frozen crews writhe under the preliminary nervousness known as ' the needle,' or collapse after bumping or being bumped. The thin and bitter rain rains on the trained and the untrained. . . . King's College boat rowed the course the first night, keeping their distance from a closely pursuing Sidney boat. They seemed very close to Edward's terrified eyes. It was probably worse for the Sidney boat wallowing in their wash and suffering all the agonies of those who are faint but pursuing. King's stole home. On the next night the Sidney crew had been threatened or doped, for Edward observed them rapidly creeping up in the Gut. The inevitable ' Give her ten ! ' realised some response, for King's crawled ahead, and thanks to the ingenuity of Cox, gained a yard round Grassy. Sidney, however, also had the originality to try ten, and Edward watched paralytically the rubber ball on Sidney's prow dancing on the waves of the King's wash. Cox turned coolly round, let it shoot at his rudder and then washed it away without turning a hair. It was otherwise on the bank, where the faces of the rival Coaches

were painful to observe and their words more painful to hear.

By the Long Reach Sidney had returned, and Edward tried to ease the pain by calculating the number of strokes he would have to row before being bumped. Ten, six, or four? More? It was impossible. They had rowed far enough for honour. Surely there was such a thing as going down with colours flying? Once again the Sidney Cox was shooting, and the discharge of revolvers on the banks had been added to the ringing of dinner-bells. Edward, suffering considerably, hoped that Sidney would bump and be done with it. But Cox pulled the King's rudder away from the diabolical rubber ball and crossed the river. Sidney on the bank furiously claimed a bump from the Umpire, who was trying from a tow-path steed to keep parallel with two approaching bumps at the same time. Kingsmen were loudly promising eternal felicity and foretelling perdition to the crew if they failed to make good their escape. The only person who kept his head was Cox, who having lured the Sidney boat across the river, steered quickly back and at Glass-Houses added half a length of safety. The Sidney Cox, mistaking reproaches for encouragement, fell into the trap and followed in the wake of King's instead of cutting them off by an arrowy flight down the Reach. King's were escaping! Edward, indifferent by now to the discomfiture of Sidney, was still waiting for Cox to give the blessed signal of surrender. On the contrary, to his dismay the running Kingsmen began sounding the bell in sign of the last lap. Sidney was rolling into their wake, but King's were under the Railway Bridge. Another fifty yards! Edward only wished to die at the Bridge. Soon he would be unconscious. He had rowed his last ten so often that afternoon. . . . He caught sight of a light-blue post as number Five leaned backward and was sick between Edward's knees. The race was over! Agony and bliss are closely related. Edward realised that the King's Lent boat was safe,

partly perhaps owing to his own reluctant efforts. Edward was congratulating himself on rowing so pluckily when the grim horror of a possible repetition the next night struck him . . . and similar it proved. The nightmare of tolling bells and screaming horns recommenced at the same fatal bends in the river. This time Sidney proved wary and declined to follow King's across the river, whereat King's came into dire jeopardy and the rubber ball on Sidney's prow seemed to be beating closer and closer tune to the crescendo of bells and cries on the bank. Edward felt bursting, and shut his eyes. He found it more and more difficult to drag his shackled spoon of an oar through the water. He felt that if he opened his eyes he would find his intestines hanging on his oar handle. It was not worth bursting his heart for a non-rowing College. King's would never go Head. He prayed for Sidney's speedy success. At the Plough the air was filled with more sound coming up the river. Volleys of shots! Edward opened his eyes and felt the boat stop under him. The running crowds on the tow-path stopped. The blue-capped Umpire also stopped. Oh, wonder of wonders! the Sidney boat stopped as well! King's took breath and laboured home on their oars. Sidney had been bumped from behind!

There was one more night of races, and the Kingsmen, heartened by their good luck, kept unlowered colours. Edward knew happiness every minute he lay in the boat-house upon heaps of towels and sweaters softer than down. He listened to the news disseminated from passing boatmen and spectators on the tow-path. Peterhouse and Magdalene had been bumped! All the Trinity boats had gone up. Corpus rowing in the Jesus style had actually overbumped! Suddenly Hopington arrived in huge and hearty voice. Both King's boats had kept their place. As a reward he intended to take them both to Ely the following week, seventeen miles **there** and seventeen back! There was

a combined groan from many prostrate men. Then he announced that a Jesus boat had been caught in the Gut. There was a sickly sound which might have been taken for an incredulous jeer. 'Who on earth caught them so early?' 'Hall!' 'Good old Hall!'

But exultation died to pity as a frowning figure was seen slowly pedalling on the opposite bank. It was Beeve looking Napoleonic. Whatever Coaches suffer, no Coach could suffer as Beeve at that moment. For him rowing was life and death. The place of Jesus on the river was more important than the Calendar and Plato and the Concert of Europe put together. Edward's mind working like smoke traced the parallel with Bonaparte. Beeve had made his College among Colleges what Bonaparte had made France among nations. Jesus was always fighting for Headship on the river, and Colleges were always adopting or dropping the Jesus style. But the Etonians stood out like England during the Continental wars, and Beeve never collared the Varsity rowing. Nevertheless he had forgotten more about watermanship than most men ever learnt. Men sympathised or gloated as he passed. A Jesus boat caught in the Gut! Beeve might find his Elba in the Isle of Ely.

Edward shared in the general satisfaction as he passed the boat-house of the Jesus men with their famous weathercock crowing to the winds with the famous legend 1875-1885 under its spurs, the decade during which they had held the Headship of the river. It was their *Arc de Triomphe*!

There was the usual boat-supper held in King's that night, at which the crews ate and drank all that had been forbidden for six weeks, and afterwards ignited a bonfire in Bodley's, which gave the observant Dr. Meleager a new idea for explaining the signal bonfires which open the *Agamemnon*, and alarmed Mr. Tulson into believing it was Guy Fawkes Day, with the consequence that he started the next morning for London

to begin his autumnal course, and only reappeared the following term. . . .

Summer term was glorious. Edward, busily reading for May exams, took evening breathers down the Backs in a punt: from the Bishop's Mill at Newnham, past Queens' with her old bricks and mullions and corner disfigurement like a Masonic Orphanage; past King's Chapel in the golden twilight; past lemon-green willows and bricked gardens and stonework bridges, to Trinity Library, slashed with demilight like pink and yellow marbling; past the elms of St. John's feathering into green rockets immobilised in the crystal air; past the perforate Bridge of Sighs, as far as the Magdalene chestnuts like candelabra dropping white spots on the floating green, which was said to vary according to the spinach requirements in St. John's College. The sanguisugent sun swept fields and flow. Sometimes a thunderstorm collected and fell in drops as large and bright as silver pieces on the dry paving. After the storm the sandmartins would slide in and out of the drains in the brickwork of the river, while swifts streaked the green pallor of the sky like black meteors released of gravity. And at night the stars netted the heavens until the constellations looked like fireflies amberised in the ether of eternity.

Trees burst into glamour. Every College kept a sacred tree at some time. Trinity Hall had cut their famous mulberry, and Sidney had felled a pear tree associated with Oliver Cromwell. Wordsworth's ash was no longer at St. John's, but Milton's mulberry still bloomed half-buried in the garden of Christ's, and Jesus boasted a walnut under which Sterne had studied. The front of Emmanuel was lined by Dutch elms, which Edward liked to think had seen Emmanuel's famous travellers, John Harvard and Lemuel Gulliver. Christ's was astir with the approaching Centenary of Darwin, whom Jasper advised Edward not to read, as inimical to faith. He stole into Christ's Hall to contemplate

the pictures of Milton and Darwin to dexter and sinister of the High Table.

Here Milton mused and Darwin once perused
 His species passing through the gate.
 They saw behind each Fellow's nape
 The fallen Angel or the risen ape,
 But in the modern Undergraduate
 They might agree both types were fused.

With summer-time the green lawn at King's lay like a square duck-pond under the grey battlements and sun-scorched pinnacles of the Chapel, whose windows began to shimmer with new colours and give some inkling of that City which is builded with the Sardis and the Sardonix, the Topaz and the Turquoise, and to see which more than one jeweller has been led to lead an honest life.

The sheafed pillars stood between like obsidian and basaltine, while the glaze vaunted in the sun-glare its freedom from the defenestration with which the Puritans blinded other Chapels and Churches in Cambridge. The sun fired the alkaline whites to silvery gauze and the double and half stains of pot-metal yellow into a golden orange and all the shades to the lightest of lemon. Sprinkled ruby and clotted purple marked the Passion motifs. In the high top the Rose of York was ensoleiled white and the Hawthorn Bush of Bosworth field fruited red against a sapphire, which made the traceries seem like the pinnacles of Babel dipped in the sky. And the colour deluge of the sun ceased not. The enamel red and sanguine of gules and flaxen aureate and tyrian tulip and heliotrope descended all the scales of the palette, as they were smeared and stippled against the nacreous film of molten white by the master glaziers of dead kings.

In the sun's warmth old Dons came out of their hives. Colleges still retained Patriarchal heads, fossil survivals of a bygone race. There was the ancient Master of Corpus, driving round the lanes like a ghost that could

not slough itself of this delectable world. There was the old Master of Magdalene, whose office had only been filled once in ninety years, a Mastership that was something between a family living and a Rotten Borough. His College, after producing Charles Kingsley and Charles Parnell, had consequently gone to seed. There was the venerable bathchair-riding Master of Clare, who had been Master since the Crimean War, and the Master of Trinity, a bland Olympian in a black skull-cap with a white Jovine beard and an untiring flow of the lengthy anecdotes that are told in Heaven after the nectar has gone round twice. They were the grand old men, so grand in their own Colleges that the world knew them not, and so old that their Colleges had forgotten they were ever young! To hurrying youth they made dumb cry that youth was not lasting, a salutary lesson in a city of everlasting youth. All the Academic Fauna were on the move, some to prey upon examinees and others on each other. When Mr. Brazier lectured on the vegetable origins of religion, Professor O'Rudgery, who combined apoplectic politics with antiquarian research, crawled like a green Batrachian out of the Pen and refuted him with the cult of the hero's grave. Professor O'Rudgery knew all about Irish Epics and prehistoric horses, and could lose his temper and find his way anywhere B.C. 'Imagine the faith of the first man who burnt his father's body,' he used to say, with vision. And Dr. Verum lectured more cleverly than ever about Euripides, showing that he sympathised with women under cloak of his anti-feminism, and exposed the holy gods by expressing their myths all too literally. Euripides loving Reason and respecting emotion was the Rationalist who appreciated the Dionysian. A King's Don before his time! But when Dr. Verum commented on Æschylus, Dr. Meleager said he had hatched a wind egg in a mare's nest, and Dr. Verum found Dr. Meleager stuffy and Dr. Meleager found Dr. Verum sticky. And of a summer's evening the University Librarian would

pass Coe Fen catching flies or watching for rare birds. He was a human index to pyramids of stored learning and lore. By his face of parchment he seemed like one cradled in incunabula, and one day he would be folded away in folios and his immense learning eaten of book-worms. Familiar figures began to disappear, but one was perennial. In the Market Place or on the Senate steps stood the guileless and one-eyed Tout. With the season he wore a bottle-green pin upon a vermilion tie. His active eye ogled visitors or scoured the streets for what escaped hurrying youth or prowling eld. Edward still enjoyed his confidences. 'I am honest, sir. I found the gold links the Emperor of China gave to Mr. Brownlow. I found the Master of Downing's salary when it was left by accident of the accountant in the public-house. I am honest, I am !' The simple, thought Edward to himself, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven before Deans and Professors of Divinity.

In the midst of this chaos of the ancient and the youthful, both in architecture and humanity, Edward and Julius went their several ways. Julius batting for the Varsity had failed a second time for the Little Go. He wrote in consoling tones to the Canon, explaining that the Examiners had requested an encore. To Lady Trywilliam he wrote to trump his Tutor's letter of complaint by alleging that the same Tutor shot foxes in the Long Vacation, and must be untrustworthy. Otherwise Julius was a model member of Trinity College. He avoided being turfy with the turfy or tipsy with tipsters, keeping his eye clear and his body clean for the all-essential game of cricket. For the same reason Julius and Edward avoided the Union Debates, where junior Heresiarchs and infant Eleutherarchs stated grave opinions in tones of becoming levity. Neither had a moment to spare.

CHAPTER XIII

OXENBRIDGE HALL

JULIUS had developed splendidly since he went into residence at Trinity. Lady Trywilliam appeared proud of his magnificence and popularity. He had purposely never been trained to work, and his incessant failure to pass any examination troubled her Ladyship much less than his College Tutor. Whatever his temptations, work was not one of them. Books were ridiculous fare for a future Master of Hounds and County Member. As Lady Trywilliam said, 'It is all very well for Edward Stornington to work for money prizes, but Julius can dispense with charity. I might as well have applied for Queen Anne's Bounty when the girls were born.'

She was proud because Julius had much more of her side of the breeding. He had shown himself a Saint Loo from the beginning. The Trywilliam in him had been carefully corrected at home, and Cambridge had brought out the Saint Loo to the full. He was polished instead of being portly, courteous instead of being coarse, tall instead of stout, a banterer instead of a buffoon. He was careless of girls and a chaffer of dames. He was well dressed, well found, well set, well favoured, splendid at games, contemptuous of all Colleges except Trinity, a good loser on the turf, selfish and satisfied. In fine, he had been spoiled to a turn of his wavy hair. His greatest effort had been to win a placed horse in the Calcutta Sweep, which had paid his racing debts, made him the favourite of the Pitt Club, and enchanted his mother. 'The dear boy fancied a horse in India; so clever of him at that distance!' During the Long

Vacation Julius made an appearance in Cherryumpton Church. As he stood there, four inches over six feet, she almost loved Edward for the natural foil he made to her boy. In spite of his rowing, Edward looked puny in comparison to Julius, ensconced Squire-like behind the heraldic screen, which divided Trywilliam dust from plebeian pulvis, until the Day of Judgment at least.

Cherryumpton Church was really a chessboard divided strategically between the Ladies of the Manor and the Rectory. Mrs. Stornington sat within the chancel. It was her Sanctuary as well as God's, and she insisted on her prior reception of the Holy Communion. On the other hand, Lady Trywilliam was tenacious of her rights as first Lady of the Parish, and required the Congregation to remain sitting or kneeling, as they preferred, while she left the Church. Only a few independent supporters of the Rectory dared shuffle out before her Ladyship, while Mrs. Stornington lay low in her chancel. It was her lines of Torres Vedras, from which she could not be dislodged. However fervent were her Ladyship's Amens to the prayers for the Royal Family, with *sotto-voce* sighs on behalf of 'the dear Duke of Cambridge,' she never reached the rails in front of the watchful Rectoress, who was sufficiently galled in week-time by seeing Lady Trywilliam drive past in her sociable and pair, making Queen Victoria's best Jubilee bob, to which all but the Radicals and the Rectoress responded.

During the Long Vacation an unexplained outbreak of ptomaine poisoning caused a great deal of extra visiting on the part of both ladies. The Canon preached from the text, 'There is death in the pot!' and the prayers for the sick had been publicly used, but both ladies circumvented possibilities under their own roofs by urging their filial eye-apples to stay with friends. Edward was advised to accept an invitation to visit Jasper at Oxenbridge in Sussex, where Jasper's father was Rector, and by a coincidence Julius found Oxenbridge Hall convenient to the country houses where he had been invited

for cricketing reasons. Lady Trywilliam was always disappointed when Julius wanted to visit, but she felt that the Saint Loo in him ought to be obeyed this time, owing to the ptomaine poisoning, which she insisted was due to the failure of the Canon's prayers. The Rectorial view attributing it to canned food was spread by Mrs. Judbud in the curious form that it was 'them touring American circuses that send their corpses to be mixed up in tins for human food to avoid parish burials.' To her, 'circuses' were the root of all evil in the world.

Mrs. Stornington was hurrying on her rounds, when the sudden sight of the hated carriage and pair sent her on an unintentional visit to Mrs. Judbud. 'Lor! Mrs. Stornington, what an amount of trouble for the parish! I do consider it is them gypsies or "circuses" that has done the harm.'

'You are fortunate not to have been touched,' said the Rectoress, 'but between us and the Church walls, Mrs. Judbud, I much suspect that the old puddings and scraps that come from the Manor had something to do with it.' Mrs. Judbud sighed into her apron. 'You don't mean to say that. Oh, how her poor Ladyship will be worried if she finds it out!' 'Pooh and pooh and pooh!' asserted Mrs. Stornington.

'Lor! there are worse things than this toe-mange poisoning,' sobbed Mrs. Judbud as she aproned tears from her mahogany cheeks. Mrs. Stornington offered her corrosive sympathy. 'Come, my good soul, there is nothing the matter with you, is there?' Mrs. Judbud seemed more and more anxious to follow Lot's wife and dissolve into salt. 'Perhaps the Canon will look in and give you a cheering word,' said Mrs. Stornington, knowing the direction of Mrs. Judbud's hero-worship. 'Oh no! There are things, ma'am, us women can only tell to women.' 'Not Veronica again, I hope?' asked Mrs. Stornington, who always kept poor Mrs. Judbud in terrified acquiescence by hinting of the

rather ancient parish scandal. 'Yes, that's the trouble.'

Mrs. Stornington drew a reef in her cheeks with a 'Faugh!' and threw a storm-gallant to the mizzen. 'I understood that Veronica was in a boarding-house at Cambridge.' 'So she was, ma'am, but she got into bad company again and was sent off. She never told us how she went to Chesterton and then to London, and now we hears she is living somewhere and somehow back of the Euston Road.' 'Somehow, somewhere?' repeated Mrs. Stornington with acidulation. 'Did she tell nobody? Does nobody know?' 'No one but Sir Julius, God bless his noble heart! He gave her five pounds, seeing her one night in a public-house, and that helped her to London, so one of her friends said.'

'Public-house? Five pounds!' Mrs. Stornington's eyes popped, and she left Mrs. Judbud immersed in one of her periodical cries, which she hushed by what theologians call a visit of devotion. Pulling out brush and suds, she gave the Crusader a homœopathic rub with bronzelike hands. Recording angels, who save up the tears of children and widows to blot out equally the sins of bores and Borgias, gauged how rich a strain mingled in Mrs. Judbud's Monkey Brand soap, though both were unavailing to 'wash clothes.' She cried for Veronica's sake, because she knew what must have happened her; and she cried because of Master Edward, because he was being worried with examinations again; and she cried because of the Canon's colds, which must be coming on with the winter; and she cried because her Crusader was dead, and because of all souls in pain. While she prayed, the Ladies Bountiful and Parochial went their several ways: Lady Trywilliam conquering and condescending, Mrs. Stornington uncharitable and enthusiastic. With Mrs. Judbud, the three covered the gamut of British motherhood. All three were devoted to a single child with all their souls, two ambitiously and one pitifully. Each would have died to save or serve

the child she loved, which was the more remarkable in Mrs. Juddbud's case, for England is a man's country and girl children are not over-fondly esteemed.

With swish of broom and swash of her bucket Mrs. Juddbud prayed, and prayed chiefly that Master Edward might somehow come by Veronica when he was a clergyman and bring her home. The old parish churches of England were made for such as Mrs. Juddbud to pray in. Encrusted with Pews and Tithes and Chancels and Squire-dom and Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Deans of Arches, they are nevertheless temples, where the poor in spirit find God.

In the Manor Julius packed his swanny-white trousers and his glossy-white waistcoats and his snowy-white ties and lily-laundered shirts, and taking an extra allowance for gratuities in his purse, set out on a cricket and dancing tour. He took the best of everything, for he was the heir, and only awaited his majority to make even his mother dowager-pensioner. He visited Canterbury for the cricket week, and other resorts where that dull substitute for English archery is played. He looked upon the green swards of Kent and Sussex, and found them good and responsive to his play. He glanced among the women in vain for the Fair Maid of Kent. To wives, maidens and hoydens, whatever their eyeward play, he made but conventional reply.

The English County even more than the Town veers round the masculine Pole. The importance of being heir in tail-male can never be over-estimated. In the Teutonic belt of countries women never attain the supremacy of Latin women. Mothers yearn in consequence for boys, husbands and lovers stamp their girls with the father's virile look. Julius rather regretted what cads enjoy, that the average of good-looking men is considerably above that of good-looking ladies in England. Hence the rush of English aristocracy into the arms of Columbine at home and Columbia abroad. For twenty years Lady Trywilliam had prayed that

Julius would marry neither an actress nor an American. Of the two she would prefer the former.

There is really no war between the sexes, fair or unfair. In England men know supremacy. Girls are snubbed in their mother's womb, for the wives of good-looking men desire boys and deprecate girls. Julius had observed with uncomplaining compassion the treatment allotted to his sisters. Black stockings, parish work and croquet mallets had been their portion. Jeanne had fashioned their débutante clothing out of her Ladyship's castings. They had been brought up to affect a genteel style rather than to enjoy the dazzlement of life. As a result they remained unspoilt, and the Saint Loo skin in spite of Trywilliam bonework made suitors and husbands of the first men they met. There are always discerning men who are unwilling to pass angels unawares, even if the angels wear black stockings!

Of Julius's sisters, Mina had married into Sussex and lived in a dream-like fourteenth-century house on the Rye and Hastings longitude between the hop-planted clefts that range the Brede Level. The lives of mediæval men had stained and embalmed the walls of Oxenbridge Hall with dumb memories of religion and love, spoliation and crime. The house still concealed its secrecy from the high-road, but grey glimpses were visible from the low marshes. The stony core of the house was rooted by cellarage and dungeon into the hillsides, but red-bricked wings had been attached in Tudor days. The entrance steps led upward to an inner massive door sheltered by a soft moulding set at either end with ringleted Edwardian heads. The door swung into a darkened kitchen, out of which a hall had been enclosed with the remains of the village rood-screen glazed and nailed into place. The rooms were panelled and poised on huge rafter beams. A deserted chapel was lighted by a traceried window with diamond glaze in place of the old staining. The chapel wing was haunted by a wicked child-killing Oxenbridge, for whose soul Mass could no longer be

said as he had enjoined by his last desperate bid for salvation. The great stairs he was said to haunt and the lower flight had been boarded in consequence. Only a side-burrow from the kitchen connected with the under-grounds, whose repute frightened away tramp and gypsy and burglar throughout the year. And over the sun-bitten, mullioned, timbered rooms, and little flights of worm-eaten stairs with oaken balustrades and pillars dented by men-at-arms, and wandering galleries and spidery passages there rolled one billowy red-tiled roof, through which strong brick-stacks rose with bulging ends like pollarded willows against the winds, which came up the Channel over Fairlight and whistled with derision to the dead Cinque Ports of England and rocked Oxenbridge Hall from its joints and jambs on nights of great storm.

A few miles over-hill Julius and Tom Oxenbridge were watching cricket on the Hastings ground. Mina was looking forward, not with sisterly pride only, to her brother's advent. No party had been arranged, except a pretty actress, Maudie Doone, whom Tom had more than admired before marriage, was in the house. Mina had been an angel until she married, but as soon as she discovered that there had been several candidates for the throne, which Lady Trywilliam had all but lost for her daughter by a series of two-edged telegrams, her angelic nature was concentrated on careful guardianship of gains. Old letters and loose photographs recalled a rival in the underworld, and, cleverer than most wives, she insisted on inviting the charmer to Oxenbridge, to Tom's embarrassment. At first he took it as a joke, but as Maudie's visits became more frequent, he realised that the ground was being cleverly cut from under him. Married men cannot renew their first love if the wife has made a friend of the mistress. Oxenbridge Hall, as a matter of fact, suited Maudie for everything except intrigue. There are many good women who would give anything to appear with men

in public. Equally there are the unclassed ladies who vainly seek a respectable woman friend. But Maudie found this friendship in Mina, and well Mina knew it.

Two years passed before Mina suspected that her arrangements were less loveproof than she believed. Easter at a French watering-place affected her husband's stability. He showed all the invisible signs of refancying Maudie. Mina had carefully selected their rooms. Her room and Maudie's opened into the same bathroom. Maudie's had no other entrance, so she was nicely under Mina's hand, but one evening while they were carrying on their bed-conversation through open doors, Mina heard a choked cough in Maudie's room which turned her heart cold.

'Have you caught cold?' she asked quickly.

'Yes, I have got a little chill. I will close my window,' answered Maudie. 'I never thought it was open,' and Mina rose hastily. Anyhow she heard it being closed by the time she crossed the bathroom, and there was nothing to say. But that cough remained with Mina. A wife knows all her husband's sighs and grunts by heart. To the jealous ear they are as unmistakable as finger-prints to the police. She knew in the way that the All-Knowing knows the unknowable that it was Tom's. Since then Mina had devised another device to hold her husband against the Queen of Hearts. Inviting Julius to Oxenbridge was her way of playing the King.

Tom and Julius were expected on the Hastings Road that evening, and the two women crossed the fields to meet them. 'He's not more than an overgrown schoolboy,' explained Mina. 'I hope you won't mind if he falls in love with you. He's very conceited, and it will do him good to be caught. Only a puppy, you know, but you can use him like a retriever.' Already Maudie had quite a stock of these valuable followers, black and white.

The two men hove into sight, walking the short cut across the marshes and driving the crying lapwings into the air. Sudden light poured round them. Invisible

horses were carrying Julius's amorous luggage in a golden chariot overhead. Cloud-wheels were revolving in the fierce rays of sunset. A long narrow spoke of darker vapour under-thrust the frame and rails of wind-beaten gold. And the charioteer was Phœbus Apollo, more bright and beautiful than mortal eyes could scan.

The first thing that struck Maudie was that Tom had shrunk in size, or was the man with him very tall? Their white trousers made them measurable a long way. Julius swung his hat in his hand and the descending sun glinted his hair. 'A golden-haired retriever,' thought Maudie, trying to decipher his features. 'That's Julius!' said Mina. 'You will soon bring him to heel.' Maudie composed herself on a broken stile by way of concealing her own lack of height. Julius did not notice her until he was introduced. He was talking about a wonderful catch he had seen at the wicket. His ruddy lips disclosed rows of unnicotined ivory. His merry head sloped backward and he laughed with huge satisfaction. Down the eddy of his laugh Maudie slipped like a drowning mayfly. Here was a man whose big eyes interested her more than his pockets. She had the presence of mind not to let him know it, and, rather than lift betraying eyes, studied her own feet, which were worthy of attention. She wished for her sheeny shoes with real diamond buckles. Thank Heaven they were locked up in her despatch box. He should see them to-night!

Tom naturally seemed glad to meet her, and his eyes swam round her dropped lids for recognition, while Mina's pried for information. What had been the effect of Julius and Maudie on each other? Nothing apparently as yet. It was disappointing to the hostess, who had planned their meeting in the glow and glamour of the summer twilight. Julius still discussed cricket. He had not caught Maudie's possibilities. He had never expected the women visiting under his mother's or sisters' roofs to prove likely or likesome to his nice clean appetite.

Passion or style in love he had none. He was too healthy to be troubled by desire. He was not excited when he was told that Maudie was an actress. He had a vague idea that she was once Tom's friend and had now become Mina's. Of life's stepping-stones and the unerring manner in which women climb from the shoulders of one man to another he had no idea. He himself had no wish to make a career of gallantry, for instinct told him that men who used women as the rungs in a ladder slipped sooner or later. He batted, bowled, and umpired in his sleep.

By dinner-time Maudie had staged a transformation scene. She dressed on the domestic side of the house. Julius was alone in the haunted wing. Plumbing was primitive at Oxenbridge, and Mina took occasion to visit her guests to see if their portions of hot water had arrived. Warm washing was timed with the cooking, and a bath consisted of a scalding trickle in a tin hip-bath.

Mina looked into Maudie's room and found that fascinator was too engrossed in fitting jewelled shoes to her feet to notice the opening and closing door. It was all that Mina wanted to see. Julius she found five minutes later folding cricket clothes. 'Why not wear a white waistcoat to-night, Julius?' she suggested. 'What on earth for?' said Julius. 'I keep them for dances and theatres.' 'Tom is wearing one,' she said. 'I am sorry I had to put you on the haunted side. Maudie likes the room next to mine. You know the one looking over the entrance, where you slept last time. Be in time for dinner.' 'Thanks, Mina, I am comfortable here. I shall be sorry to go to-morrow.' 'To-morrow?' 'Yes, to-morrow.' Whatever Mina might suppose, Julius would obviously dispose the event.

When Julius entered the black-beamed dining-room and stood in the wine-coloured light, Mina's eyes lit with the pleasure and pride that Englishwomen feel in their men folk. Maudie was thrilled, and Mina's pretty little gambit was set. 'Julius, I do hope you will not be bored,'

she said ; ' the Rector's son and Edward Stornington, a Cambridge friend of yours, are coming to dinner. They are interested in the ghost, and have asked leave to investigate. Tom has been giving them the run of the house lately.' ' Delighted,' said Julius carelessly as he carefully adjusted a dazzling white butterfly round his throat with minute gold pins.

All through dinner Mina found herself wishing for the first time that Maudie's charms were more effective. Why couldn't Julius notice the extreme care with which Maudie had dressed ? She wore no jewels except on her exquisitely graven feet, and no trimmings to her well-cut uni-coloured dress. Her figure fitted the close chiffon silk like veins under a delicate skin. Jasper and Edward completed the party.

Dinner went with conventional clockwork, from the thickly visible soup to the invisible soap which the company toyed in their finger-glasses. Jasper was allowed to make the conversation. He described the measurements he was taking on behalf of the Society for Psychical Research in the haunted wing. He spoke with subdued exaltation of the supernatural. He was never weary of his formula that the common or garden house-ghost proved the Holy Ghost. The cricketers looked baffled.

Dinner proved agreeable. The Cambridge men told startling tales about the O.B. After coffee Jasper and Edward withdrew to watch the house in moonlight. The others settled down to play bridge, Mina and Julius against Jack and Maudie. Julius never cared whether he won at cards, but Mina carried a winning look. Rubbers proceeded slowly, as though the players were thinking of different games. Julius was trying to make up his mind about Maudie. She wasn't what he expected, not so rotten, and it cost him an unusual effort to reach that prepossessing conclusion. Maudie curbed her admiration for Julius. She was swayed by the conceit of his talk and the generosity of his gesture. Money he mentioned in terms of ' ponies ' and ' monkeys.' His

plans, invitations and even banterings were on the scale which is so overwhelming to the English middle class. For all her beauty Maudie was Lower Middle, and the very name of Sir Julius sounded good to hear. She would have liked his strong arms and money-bags and position between her and those far-away wolves, who scent, follow and run the fastest women to their doom. Maudie had been launched on the currents of the underworld for ten years, and unconsciously wanted breakwater and anchorage. Oxenbridge gave her a breakwater. Would Julius give her the other? She was never in love, for too many men had loved her to allow her time for personal experience. She invariably received much and gave the minimum return. She had no sensitiveness of soul, but her blood was easily roused and responsive. Tom knew her well enough to realise the situation. As host and husband he was caught and held in his own Castle. Mina was trumping his Queen. It was no use his reproving Maudie, but he decided to give a hint to Julius. As they went to bed he said, 'Good-night, Julius; don't let Maudie dazzle your eye for cricket. I think she likes you. She has liked so many.' Tom watched Julius's glowing face, then shrugging his shoulders he let events take their course. Julius nodded, but he did not grasp possibilities until his sister stood in his doorway later with a lighted candle.

'Is that you, Mina? What an amusing evening! I wasn't a bit bored even by the parsons,' and he laughed. 'By the way, Maudie Doone? she was at the Gaiety once, wasn't she?' 'Yes; she made a short success, but then retired.' 'Found more talent off the boards?' laughed Julius with Trywilliam coarseness. 'Don't say that,' said Mina sharply; 'she lives rather quietly now. She has not worn finery until you appeared.' Julius laughed. 'She won't fall for me.' 'Julius, Julius, I am sure she has, she has!' Mina passed down the old staircase, making little creaks which echoed into the bowels of the house. . . .

Maudie was undressing thoughtfully on the other side of the house. She looked at herself stripped in the glass, and found her shape as good to her eyes as it must have seemed to the Creator, Who created her for love and happiness and not for misery and lust. Poor Maudie was quite devoid of any theological sense, even of the home-made casuistry which serves so many women in the daily criss-cross of their lives. She had always been too busy dealing with the pressing ultimata delivered to her by the hour and the minute to give any extended study to the ultimates of Eternity. Whence and Whither she knew not. But where she stood or wherefore she fell she understood.

Yet for her soul's peace and not for her hurt and harrying was her fairness designed, and not to be trodden and broken by men. Half-flower she seemed, and she lived as careless as the flowers, who enjoy the passions and perfumes of the day without dread of the night, without thought of the flowers of yesterday. Her blossom was the blossom of paradisaal spring, and not even, if her mind had been trained to undertake teleological speculations, could she have foreseen herself burned in the summer-time of her life or eventually cast like the dried and lifeless grass into an autumnal oven. It was strange that He, who had ensouled and enshrined her out of all Eternity, should have planted no corresponding thought of Himself. Maudie did not really believe in God. She could have given no reason, except perhaps the old text in the Pentateuch that in His own image God created man, for the converse might be possible, and if God at all resembled man as Maudie had known him, perhaps the poor child felt justified in preferring to know nothing of God at all. Maudie was one of Nature's women, who remain unmoral at heart but always concede an original morality to the sex, from which lawgivers and clergy and moralists are always drawn. Vaguely she believed that men fell from morality, whereas women were required to achieve it. And she had not even begun her upward achievement.

Love and life had been casual to Maudie. She had been tossed hither and thither, sometimes pleasurably and sometimes with a preluding prick of pain in her woman's heart. She had been born without a cruel or an evil thought. Her training had not given her a moral or an original thought either. She prided herself on doing three things well; that she could cook and sew and make love. Men, she found, could be made happy by feeding and then by flattering. So much for her cooking and love-making, for Anglo-Saxon love resolves itself into flattery of men by women. But the sewing was her own little secret pleasure, and amid her exotic jewellery and vanities of Venus she always carried a little miniature work-basket. It was a symbol of happier days in the past, and she regarded it as the promise of happiness in the days to come. Of all her possessions it contained the one which she treasured most. It was a thimble, which an admirer had sent her after watching her sew. But it was a thimble set with one big sapphire.

Maudie had been childishly impressed by Julius during the evening. Their glances had met and trembled like the meeting of lightning and sunlight, as though each were too accustomed to supremacy to endure the unexpected shaft of the other. They had mingled laughter together like the jointure of waterfall and stream, but, whether his laugh was that of delighted anticipation or of good-natured contempt, she could not decide. Instinct told her that she would not be left uncourted. She put away her evening clothes and assumed a fur cloak whose warm clutch heartened her to open the casement. Through the three-foot wall a silvery chill reached her from the moon-mottled marshes. She gave the ghost of a shiver. The beauty of the night-clad wold made no appeal to her. She was, like all her tribe, so artificial.

Before she went to bed she rouged her lips and washed her hands with perfume. Scented soap and rouge symbolled the unreality of her life. Her position, her

pose, her meaning, and her mind were all unreal. She herself was only a phantom of pleasure. She glanced into the night without wonder or wistfulness. She was a little afraid of the very stillness. She was nyctalopous like a cat, and her eyes meshed the detail of the fields and marshes. In the moonlight the countryside, which was looking like a marasma of itself, did not even appear strange to her. It only seemed depressing and chilly. The dregs of the day slid through her memory. She felt dashed and disappointed, of what? She looked into the heavens thickly bulged with travelling clouds and shifting clarities. Few and occasional stars gleamed through the vapours. They meant nothing to her. No unfarrowed fate lay behind their subtle light, which rapidly disappeared eastward into the clouds concealing the unmorrowed day. Suddenly the wind shifted and there was a clearance in the heavens. The visible constellations declared the eternal chastity of spaces, in which there was neither darkness nor lucidity, cleanness nor unclean, past nor present nor future. Nought but the Divine Frigidity.

She heard the staircase clock throw a mellow chime of eleven. The house was deathly quiet and she sat up listening. She was used to owls purring under the eaves, and she recognised the microscopic carpentry of the death-watch beetles. Then she heard steps, and her heart beat as it had not beaten since admirers had first come to the stage door of the Gaiety. . . . The steps passed on and then she heard a voice, a queer old mumbling voice, and she was frightened. Night was only endurable at Oxenbridge under lee of her hostess. She felt too frightened to move. She wished she were in a comfortable room of the Savoy with plush furniture and a modern bathroom. She never liked romantic surroundings. The sexuality began to ooze from her panicky heart. The voice began again and she felt something like cold breath in the room. If it had continued it would have been a draught. Maudie lay back in sheer imaginative terror. . . .

At the other end of the house Julius had undressed slowly. For a moment he stared through the window at the Sussex star-scape. It looked like fine weather for the next day. The principal thing about Sussex was that it was a first-class county in cricket. He wondered whether he would ever play first-class cricket himself. That he often wondered. That he desired. He heard the clock strike eleven and remembered something. . . . He threw on a cricket blazer and white trousers and crept down the stairs in his socks, descending carefully as far as the flight which had been boarded over. He stopped, minutely listening. . . . Creak ! Creak ! . . . To his horror he heard his steps continue into the lower level. Slowly they died away, and he was left wondering whether he had grown cold with fear or with the night air. He waited and waited. . . . Something that was neither himself nor his echo had walked away into the black cellarage behind nailed boards ! Had he not been in perfect training, he would have sweated chalky beads. As it was, he leaned against the panelling and felt worms crawling in his spine. He tried to hear his own heart. He felt that he could never move further. He felt abject, slushy fear overwhelming him for the first time. . . . Then he remembered that for some reason he was in his socks and must keep still. Oh yes, it was that girl, and for the first time he began to suffer from dual emotion. Hitherto his feelings had always been straightforward and of the moment. Freedom from complex is the perquisite of the keen. His hearty honour-bright cricketing heart was contending with rival gusts of emotion, with dread and with desire. Dread compelled him to return, but desire made him yearn to go on. Terrified in spirit, he ached in the flesh. A few strides would bring him back to the safety of his room. But no ! Youth beat impetuously in his veins. It was a trap or a trick of fate to prevent him reaching that girl, and Mina had said she was his for the taking. Well, faint heart never won fair

lady, and he crept slowly into the drawing-room, pressing the walls with finger-tips to break the fall of his feet, and through the dining-room, where the soda syphons gave him the comfort of earthly reassurance. The hall was dark and eerie, and the door into the kitchen creaked horribly. But Love is a powerful god, and trembling less with ghostly fright than with pleasurable uncertainty, Julius began to climb the stairs into the connubial wing, when once more his heart failed him. Those damnable steps were moving toward him! He heard every tremor and stood stock still against the wall. They were creaking the stairs on which he was standing! Another turn and they would be upon him! Ugh! how his marrow crawled! They were coming out of the void, out of the boarded sepulchral cellars. . . . He forgot love and life. His fear, like the fear of all jolly souls and unthinking fellows, became untempered fright. The spirit of his spirit died within him. He could see two figures outlined against the glamour of the stars. . . . Then Jasper and Edward passed, groping their way. 'I think that the recitation of the Office of the Dead must have given that poor soul peace,' Jasper was saying. 'My theory, Edward, is that all these ghosts are really the souls in Purgatory trying to snatch prayers. That explains why there are so few ghosts in Latin countries, where Masses are always being said for them. It is in Protestant countries that ghosts chiefly walk and scream and clank. More priests, less ghosts, you know.' To all of which Edward was giving sleepy acquiescence, and the two friends left the house by the back door. 'God wring their cursed necks!' said Julius, recovering himself in an instant. A minute later he opened Maudie's door. . . .

The night was destinal. Never did the chimneys and gables of Oxenbridge Hall so starkly and distinctly divide the demi-shadows. The lines of roof and mullion were silvered by the splendid satellite, whose light, issuing from no more than the lunula of a cosmic finger-nail, was

completed by the constellations. The Eve-star, which had queened the Downs, was already lost in the Gargantual galaxies of Space. Nebulas were dimly apparent like milky cobwebs entangled with the embrions of unbegotten worlds. From beyond the further side of the Void itself glimmered the travelling light of long-perished stars ghostly upon the film of planetary time. Familiar glories of the solar system orb'd the nearer vault. Their motions and lations gave an assurance of mechanical life lacking upon planitudes, which swerved outside all human comprehension. Their divine and heathen names did not belie their beauty. But the Christian planet which carries all human hope and horoscope rolled through the greater night of the Universe nameless.

The whole of Sussex umbered by the darkness had suffered a resurrection in silver point. Summer in all her lustihood had taken hold of faune and flore. The garish greenery of the daytime had turned now into the magic and mysterious greys of enchantment. All stayed as still as death, but in the shaws and hedges the timber trees were storing their sap with coralline industry into hidden rings. Nightbirds shouldered the air unheard, and unseen the English nadders and wyverns gyred through the grass. The marshes became redolent with rural amaranths and molies. There arose a scent which all the company of Spicers and Apothecaries could not have achieved. As the shroud kept by the thrifty housewife in lavender passes at time of death to the rosemary, so the mist lying upon the Brede levels had with the death of the solar sphere exchanged the sun-dried odours of day for the subtler and more piercing perfumes of the dark. Sweeter than cinnamon and silfy.

It was a destinal year, for a caudated comet hung from the causeway of the firmament like a long vertical string of quicksilver.

CHAPTER XIV

POPE AND PROCTOR

WITH the Michaelmas term Edward met a new side of University life, the Roman Question. A shadow clings to mildewed walls that have ever sheltered agents of the ageless Bishop of Rome. A glamour rests on the rain-riven stones and wind-pierced pinnacles. Furtive Benedictines worked under the shadow of Christ's. Shy Monsignors lived here and there. Stray Catholic undergraduates were spiritually watched by Papal deputies; and toward the Railway Station, on the outskirts of the town, soared a cathedral-like building challenging every tower and spire in Cambridge and defeating all save the massive tower of St. John's, alluded to by the learned as '*the Johannine Comma*,' and the spire of All Saints, which pointed the primrose road to Newmarket. Unchipped by sun-ray and unsmoothed by rain, the modern Catholic edifice sent resounding and musical challenges every quarter of an hour against the Protestant belfries and steeples in Cambridge. The plain-chant melodies and the Easter *Alleluia* were audible a mile away in Edward's rooms, and he added them to those bells, for whose sound he listened regularly and for whom he felt unchanging friendship—like the silver note of Caius, which was like a siren singing the Angelus.

On his way back from Fenner's, where he had been watching the Freshmen's Sports, Edward ran into Baron Falco passing the Catholic Church. 'Watching the sports?' he asked. 'No sports are worth watching unless the competitors run naked.' 'They could in Greece where no women were present,' said Edward.

‘Nonsense ; it was to the eyes of women that athletes revealed the beauty of limb and loin they were expected to bear. However, you must make up your mind that this is a land dedicated to Ugliness. The everlasting struggle lies between the Beautiful trying to disrobe itself and Ugliness clamouring for more clothing. But do not let me delay you.’

The Baron had an unconventional way of seeing things. ‘I have only just left bed,’ he continued, ‘but my first task must be to leave a card on St. Joseph, an influential old gentleman. Come inside.’ Before he could recall paternal warnings Edward crossed the threshold of the Catholic Church. It was a magnificent *édition de luxe* of St. Giles’. St. Giles’ was tawdry, but this was blatant. St. Giles’ suggested mysteries, but this enforced them. St. Giles’ was dilettante, but this was dogmatic, hurling credal criteria and the furniture of Church Councils at the visitor’s head. There were business-like Confessionals. A red light signalled the Real Presence. The windows blazoned Tudor horrors : priests being racked and Carthusians going to disembowelment. Inside the tower-arch was a Doom painted in glowing colours. It might all have been ordered from Whiteley’s, if Universal Church employed Universal Providers. Edward must have shown his feelings by his face, for a voice said to him, ‘Awfully crude, isn’t it ? But you shouldn’t have taken away the great lanthorn of Ely. We had to put up this instead. It’s awfully cramped. I always feel that my prayers catch in the baldachino.’ Edward became aware of a priestly figure in a black cassock, with staring eyes and tawny tousled hair. ‘Oh, do you know Father Rolle, my dearest friend and collaborator ?’ said the Baron.

‘Come and have tea. There’s just time,’ said the priest. ‘I am in the middle of a novel, and a mystic Anabaptist is calling in half an hour. But till then. This Anabaptist picked up one of the miraculous medals I leave in trains or hide between bricks.’ The Baron

introduced Edward: 'Mr. Stornington of King's, an Anglican Ordinand.' Edward blushed, and then blushed that he had blushed. Why should he be ashamed of his Church? 'Oh, we all begin life as Anglican Ordinands whether we end up Cardinals or sweeps,' suggested Father Rolle agreeably. They made their way into the clergy-house, a red-brick bungalow, brand-new, but pleasantly shaded by a big bottle-green cedar. The priest's room was filled with signs of canonical vesture, dilettante sport and unfinished fiction. Huge rosaries hung out of deers' antlers. In the midst stood a real Roman priest! His atmosphere was not oily nor foreign, and he looked more deluded than deluding. His eyes were a smoky blue, courageous in their goggle-glare. Like his nose they were, if not more prominent, more arresting than his brow and chin. His chin was shaved in more ways than one. The aquiline nose sniffed or snorted contempt or complacency. His mouth was tender without being well shaped, rather like the mouth of a horse desensitised by a bit. Over his skull strayed wispy hair the colour of stale honey. The general effect was winsome and winning. Father Rolle spoke with the same keenness about the Pope that Englishmen feel about hunting. Religion was more than a Sunday game to him. It was God's sport revealed to men!

The Father went into delighted giggles. 'It's a gorgeous life here with this Gothic building between us and the Puritan tide of Cambridge. I feel the miasma of the Reformation. It began at Cambridge, Cambridge producing the Reformers and Oxford burning them. It sounds horrible, but it marks the real difference between the two places.'

'A horrible thing to produce Reformers,' murmured the Baron. 'I ventured to state as much in my lectures at Granelly College. For my devotion to historical truth I was relieved of my office, and the boys loved me so.' 'Never mind,' said Father Rolle. 'I had to give up my chances of being an Anglican Dean as well as leave the

Fathers of the Divine Blood, my happiest home on earth.' Edward tried to look sympathetic without compromising himself. The effect in Father Rolle's shaving-glass was a squint. . . . Tea was poured and his host radiated over his saucer. 'It's a splendid life. I have to fight Puritanism or go mad. I devote myself to the three acts of Creation: saying Mass, mental prayer and writing.'

'Creating novels is a lower order of creation in which I share: but mental prayer?' queried the Baron. 'That is the creation of divine images. I need not say what is created at Mass.' 'All beauty lies in the Divine Image,' said the Baron, with the shrewdness of a formula which covers a multitude of sins. 'I can only love beautiful abstractions and things, and the beautiful must be divine—flowers and folios, old silver vinaigrettes, the art of the Gondola, boyhood—the panorama of the sea's depths! *Deo Gratias!* I say for all these.'

Father Rolle, who seemed entranced whenever the Baron spoke, said, 'Don't be carried away by the beauty of the world, all the same. I have a book on hand to make the lovers of this world sit up! Imagine an American Antichrist, a combination of Frederick the Second and an L.C.C. schoolmaster, becoming Emperor of Humanity, the Pope driven from Rome, Russia breaking loose, the end of the world and of the Glory and Ing glory thereof!' 'Splendid!' echoed the Baron; 'make the last Pope an Englishman and make him canonise Henry the Sixth and Mary Queen of Scots. Restore the Stuarts to Windsor and the Bourbons to Versailles. Socialism must be made a heresy *ex-cathedra*, and birth-control. That will teach women the difference between business and pleasure.'

Father Rolle hardly seemed to listen, but he added, 'and abolish German religion and the German Emperor.' 'No!' shot the Baron, 'he must become a Catholic or lose his Empire.' 'How utterly gorgeous! but how I love the idea of a Jacobite Pope!' said Father Rolle.

‘What a pity the folly of the Stuarts increased with their piety.’ ‘Never mind, they had their martyrs,’ said the Baron. ‘The cause of the Venerable Mary of Scotland is actually in my dressing-case. I trust its contents will add to Queen Elizabeth’s torments in Hell.’ ‘Now you know you mustn’t say that anybody is in Hell,’ expostulated the priest, ‘the Protestant Churches tot up the damned sometimes, but Catholics only catalogue Saints.’ ‘Well, Elizabeth,’ shouted the Baron, ‘was a horror among women even. Do you know the worst?’

‘Well, I have studied her death-bed very carefully and find that it was well reflected in that terrible death effigy of her preserved in Westminster Abbey. Obviously the Devil was looking at her.’ ‘Or perhaps a priest with his navel unstrung on the rack?’ suggested the comforting Baron. ‘When priests would not pretend to be stricken with admiration for her bright occidental star, she threw them to the torturers.’ Father Rolle shuddered and remarked, ‘All that would make subject for another terrible novel. I do believe in making Protestants creep. It is the only way they can understand anything.’

The Baron was remorseless. ‘I have discovered what I think is the key to the Tudor horror. A Jesuit once told me that Elizabeth and her mother Anne were possibly sisters. Certainly Elizabeth inherited the King’s disease, of which he and Edward the Sixth died piecemeal. Bishop Creighton, her historian, knew but never dared write it. Those who have delved in the Bodleian know terrible things.’ . . . And the two friends fell to planning a book on the blissful Martyr of Canterbury. They conjured up the Benedictine calm, the beauty of vestments and gilded stuffs and black silks, and of chalices set with moonstones and turquoises in the Cathedral; and the fierce entry of mailed assassins, the climax of the struggle between Church and State as the miracle-breeding blood of the Archbishop splashed the quiet stones of the Minster—and the Canterbury

Tales were born ! ‘ We shall scoop heaps of money,’ said Father Rolle, ‘ enough to build my lay monastery for cranks—Catholic cranks, of course, and literary lunatics.’

‘ Splendid ! ’ said the Baron : ‘ a Religious Order, all religion and no particular order ! ’

Father Rolle began to coo propaganda about the model English village he intended to raise, as though the Reformation had never been. . . . ‘ And a Chapel full of Relics, real English ones, no Irish or Catacomb martyrs, a piece of St. George and a bloody handkerchief from Tyburn, and if only we could steal the head of Blessed Thomas More—you know where it is.’

‘ Yes, of course, in the Roper vault at Canterbury. I have tried again and again to snatch it from Margaret Roper’s coffin,’ and the Baron turned to Edward, ‘ You know his daughter took his head from London Bridge and carried it with her till death, which could not them part.’ ‘ By the way,’ said Father Rolle, ‘ if you are doing nothing on Sunday night, come to the Society of the Holy Fisherman, which meets at Llandaff House after Benediction. Monsignor Burns is reading a paper on the Sanctity of James the Second. Good-bye ; *Pax Domini vobiscum*,’ and the Baron and Edward were hustled out of the door, in which stood the mystical Anabaptist. . . .

Incidents on the following day tended to obscure Edward’s Catholic impressions. In honour of the Rugby Football Match with the ‘ All Blacks,’ a touring cargo of New Zealanders, the Boat Club took a holiday and Edward joined the swarm of spectators. The New Zealanders had swept English football before them, and their triumphant progress was not likely to be abated at Cambridge. A glowing and anxious crowd cheered the fortunes of the Varsity. It was a still day and a wreath of tobacco mist was wafted from the line of spectators like the thin blue smoke of a sacrifice to Victory.

It was a swift and wonderful match. The ‘ All Blacks ’

conquered in the scrum, heeling out and passing the ball to their three-quarters, who were only stopped by the fierce tackling. Men with the strength of prize-fighters and speed of sprinters hurled themselves at the visitors, snatching them by neck and ankle, or hugging them with bearlike grip to the ground. And when the forwards were worsted, the backs saved the position by long curving kicks into distant touch. Only just before half-time did the 'All Blacks' score their first try. However bravely the Varsity pressed, the others began mechanically to score. It was the strife of men against gods—dark, infernal Furies irresistible. But oh for a Pindar to have sung the Epinikian Ode!

In figures it was a victory for the 'All Blacks,' but figuratively it was a triumph for Cambridge. The Varsity returned almost dazed by the brilliance of their representatives. Exultation lit the hearts of the spectators. The conflicts against Oxford take place in London, and no reaction reaches the deserted University towns. Enthusiasm over the Boat Race and the Rugby Match shows itself in Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus. At Oxford and Cambridge the results are only read by lethargic *gyps* and scowling *scouts*. But the match against New Zealand was worthy of local commemoration. After Hall Edward slipped into the bevy of rowing men sallying from the College gates in search of whatsoever things were riotous, whatsoever things were rowdy. 'Come along, Stornington!' shouted Hopington. 'I hear there is to be a bonfire on the Midsummer Common.' A dozen joined arms and were joined by outpourings from Caius and Christ's and Sidney as they made for the river. . . . They marched down the Petty Cury and the old Falcon Inn, past the hideous Post Office, which replaced one of the oldest and most picturesque of Cambridge houses. Every building suggested a memory to Edward nowadays. They passed Christ's, and he thought of Darwin setting out for the trip on the *Beagle* taking one volume, a pre-

vious Christ-man's work called *Paradise Lost*, and writing on his return a scientific *Paradise Lost* for unsuspecting mankind, who had hitherto believed they had fallen and not risen. They passed the dark portcullis of Sidney, wealthy and battlemented, the nurse of Cromwell, whose name had been entered on Sidney's books while Shakespeare lay dying. Further down Jesus Lane the bulging tower of Jesus gate was visible from the road through a funnel path. . . . At the corner of the Common a divine frenzy seemed to catch the crowd of gownsmen and they hurled themselves through the night. Almost simultaneously a darkling mob confronted them, and mid joyous cries battalions were hailed from Trinity and John's, while cries of 'Wood!' and 'Fire!' rent the palustrous air.

Men worked like maniacs. Timber was scraped from adjoining back-yards. Flames crept heavenward, and the whole Common became illumined with the sickly yellow light of burning boards and garden refuse. Hardy spirits climbed into the neighbouring gardens and dislodged wooden out-houses to heap wholesale upon the flames, including perambulators, and even a garden roller, which was optimistically added to the blaze. Huge advertisement boards were dragged to the scene under the arms of twenty men. Only brick saved Barnwell from sacrifice, and fortunately the Cam flowed between Chesterton and destruction!

There comes a time when Fire becomes a great reveling, roistering, intoxicating personality, demanding more and more refreshment for his red elastic maw. Edward was carried away by primitive fire worship. For once he determined to be one of the boys, and stood on the railings handing plank and garden utensils over the heads of the crowd like plates at a school-feast. When the flames billowed, he cheered with all his lungs—'Varsity! Varsity!' It was the old triumph of Gown over Town. If townsmen build such ugly out-houses they deserved to have them burnt under their eyes.

And it was a splendid sheet of fire, worthy of a Brobdingnagian Guy. . . . He had become separated from the Kingsmen and was working with strangers in the dark. Suddenly he felt the plank he was handling seized and tightly held. He struggled, overbalanced, and tumbled upon an individual who snatched his legs. At the same time another took his arms.

‘This is the gent doing all the trouble,’ one of these individuals remarked. He wore a battered top-hat over the face of a convict turned Beadle. ‘Your name and College, sir?’ asked an elderly gentleman with a flowing white band on his silk gown. Edward, quite dazed, realised that he was in the hands of the Proctor. At the first cry of ‘*Bull-dogs!*’ gownsmen had evacuated the corner and left a few jeering townees, amongst whom Edward was promptly detected and arrested. ‘Storning-ton of King’s, sir!’

His name was pencilled by the fierce light. ‘You will go home to your College, sir.’ ‘But I have not done more than hundreds here.’ ‘He’s the one doing all the trouble,’ sang the accompanying *bull-dog*. ‘I wish you to know, sir, how much I appreciate what you are doing for law and order, and if I can afford any help,’ tried Edward with a moral flounder, but he was thrust aside, and the Proctor began diving into the crowd for other victims without requiring Edward’s alarmed assistance.

Edward returned to King’s at full speed and spent an unhappy hour trying to make alibis at the Porter’s Lodge and in Jasper’s rooms and finally with the Tutor, who received the news with absent-minded merriment. Seeing Edward’s real agitation, he endeavoured to soothe him by looking out the Proctors in the University list. ‘Mr. Fisher of Trinity; possibly it was him? a very tall, I should say good-looking person. He has been styled one of Nature’s Etonians! Perhaps he may prove amenable to a Kingsman?’ ‘No, he had a frizzled pepper and salt beard.’ ‘Then it must be Mr. Peckover

of Magdalene. No doubt you will hear from him, politely, but not magnanimously, in the morning.' Edward dropped his head. 'I should go to bed and read Surtees, I think. I can witness that you have not taken part in further proceedings.' 'But what will happen to me?' cried Edward. 'You may be sent down. But perhaps you may only lose your rooms.' 'Won't it give great trouble if I change my rooms?' groaned Edward. 'A pot o' paint, a pot o' paint, that 's all,' chirruped the Tutor. 'Good-night.'

Edward gave himself over to severe self-examination that night. For the first time in his life he had the uncomfortable feeling of being cornered. There was still the chapter of accidents. Mr. Peckover might perish in the flames and nothing more be heard of the escapade. He almost wished that Mr. Peckover was sufficiently heretical to merit a fiery exit. Otherwise resource must be had to prayer. There were several avenues might be suggested to the Disposer Supreme. Mr. Peckover's memory might fail. The proctorial summons might be lost on the way. There were special King's privileges. Only King's could send down a Kingsman. . . .

Sunday was a day of waiting. Edward slaked the increasing discomfort of his soul by attending all the Chapels. Handel figured in the evening Anthem, 'Let the Bright Seraphim!' The organist sat in the high loft. His hands looked like the white teeth of a rodent as he chewed the Prelude. Suddenly they moved into arcs and loosed torrents of melody. For a moment his fingers waited for the choristers below. The great organ enclosed the very dumbness of space or chaos before the music of the spheres had filtered through the stellar magnitudes. Then suddenly, as Aristotle described the first Mover, all unmoved himself, communicating motion to the creation by moving it like a thing beloved, he stroked the triple keyboard. His finger-tips drew out the stops like magnets pulling iron filings. Constellations of notes crashed into figure. Planetary sounds

swam through octave. He was building contrapuntal houses of sound out of musical figures—houses of dancing sand or tremulous cards only to be dashed into air inane by the next great organ groan. There was a sound as of angels playing Dulcimer and Sambuke and Barbiton and Sackbut and all kinds of minstrelsy. In that Gothic shrine the music of Hanoverian Handel was like new wine poured into an old bottle. And the organist threw and splashed and foamed the heady fantastic fluid as though he intended to burst the vault. Every time that he warbled scales or threw the strength of his diapason down the stone corridor of the Chapel, Edward expected a whole window to crash outwards. Again his fingers stroked the ivory as though he were calming the steeds of sound. Again he loosed them like the Greek Charioteer into the storm of wood-wind pouring out of the old oak. Then his hands were stayed in the air. The choristers gathered their voices into one thin and delicate cry. For a last time his hands hung motionless. When they fell, they fell like the descent of the Holy Ghost ! . . .

That evening Edward felt listless and unable to work. He decided to try the Society of the Holy Fisherman and found himself walking down St. Andrew's Road past the bleak lion-scutcheoned portico of Emmanuel. Opposite the University Arms Hotel he saw undergraduates entering into the open door of Llandaff House. He followed, and found himself welcomed by Father Rolle in a low candle-lit room. Signed photographs of the reigning Pontiff and Cardinal of State sanctified the usual bric-à-brac. Monsignor Burns, a tall ex-artillery officer with a scholar's stoop, fronted the fire. He wore what Edward mistook for a purple kimono. A nimbus of grey locks surrounded his learned skull. He was Antiquarian-in-ordinary to the Pope. The room whispered his achievements. He had located the body of St. Peter. He had discovered the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask. He had overwhelmed and answered an anti-Papal chapter in the *Cambridge Modern History*.

He had suggested reasons for believing that Milton had died a Papist. . . .

The Monsignor slowly read a paper on Catholic history which sounded to Edward like normal English history upside down. James the Second was no villain but a Saint, no coward but a brave naval officer. He founded the modern British Navy and died in the odour of sanctity, a spiritual Admiral of the Blue! Miracles occurred at his tomb. It sounded like a splendid attempt to pull Macaulay's leg. 'Like the Monk addressing the Council of Chalcedon, I offer my presumptuous ignorance to the experience of your beatitudes,' said the Monsignor and sat down.

The paper was followed by discussion. 'The Baron,' whispered Father Rolle, 'such a wonderful man!' as a grave Teuton, philosophical of speech and prophetic of countenance, rose and unravelled the mysticism of the Saints with Higher Criticism. His soft German involutions of English speech seemed incomprehensible even to himself. Father Rolle whispered, 'He is supposed to be a Modernist. He goes to Communion every morning lest it be his last. There may be an excommunication on the breakfast-table. Nobody, who thinks or thinks that he thinks, is safe. Even the Archbishop is suspect for protecting Father Tyrrell. But I should read Tyrrell while you may. He may be on the Index to-morrow. He writes wonderful books, all about the love of God, but he will never get another *Imprimatur*, not even if he wrote the *Imitation*. The Baron is his friend—Baron von Bugle, you know.'

The Baron was still distending long sinuous sentences, in which every noun was pronounced with a Capital and prepositions were saved up as punctuation at the end. He spoke a mixture of High German and Low English, never shirking slang or squibs, if he might deliver the coals which the Cherubim had dropped on his lips. His fine ivory brow gleamed volcano-like under a skin of vibrous snow. Suddenly he sat down, and hoisting an

ear-trumpet against the faint applause plaintively asked for reply or reprimand with the single syllable, 'Please!' But no man durst answer him a word. People rose to depart. As Edward left, a slight good-looking man seemed to recognise him. It was Colley, a John's oarsman, whom he often saw on the river. He had been tried for the Varsity boat. Colley introduced himself. Apparently he was a Catholic, for he asked Edward to lunch one day and to see the vestments upstairs as a treat!

Edward agreed, and as their eyes met, a subconscious laugh passed between them quite apart from their owners' humour. 'I feel I have met you before,' said Colley. An addled spark swam to the surface of Edward's brain. He remembered a childhood dream: the slow passage across the horizon of a train from which looked a youth of beautiful countenance. He remembered praying they might meet. He had never seen anybody so good-looking before.

'Sign on a lifer, if you will,' said Colley. Edward would have signed a blank cheque if Colley had asked him. 'I mean, let us sign a friendship for life.' Edward bowed his head.

'If you are not in a hurry this might interest you. It is the new game of Dioceses I have invented. You see, you cut them out of a map and mount them. Nice for Seminarians to play.' . . .

The next morning Edward received a printed request to call on Mr. Peckover of Magdalene, who informed him very stiffly that the University intended to send him down.

CHAPTER XV

THE EAST END

CANON STORNINGTON was reading the *Church Times*, not with full approval, for he skipped the leaders comparing the orthodoxy of Lord Halifax to the inorthodoxy of Canon Hensley Henson. His eye lit for a moment on the personal column. 'The Bishop of the Diocese is not so well,' and as he glanced at Mrs. Stornington, 'I am sorry to say.' Mrs. Stornington sighed meaningly, but the Canon did not catch her meaning. Her ambition was not fulfilled by Edward's mere progress and success at King's. Devout as she was, she knew in her heart that any parson could become a Bishop. It needed no extra quality such as made a painter an Academician or a songster a Prima Donna. The Episcopal function was immaterial and invisible. Once arrayed in shovel hat and gaiters and apron, no one would deny that her husband was a Bishop except the Romanists, who denied there was a real Bishop on the Bench. 'Is there any mention of the Bishop's malady? Any doctor in attendance?' she asked kindly. 'No, my dear, but he has been ordered to give up all engagements till Christmas. We must say the Litany for him sometimes.' She left him to resume her household accounts. She was recalled by a cry of pain. . . . The Canon stood staring into a letter, and whispering, 'Oh Absalom, Oh Absalom, Oh my beloved son!' 'Well, what has happened? Nothing to Edward?' 'This is a note from the Tutor of the College which is Edward's College no longer. He has been sent down in disgrace.' And he sank his head upon the pillows of the sofa. There was

another letter, a piteous entreaty from Edward himself to be allowed to live a life of penance in the East End with the Fathers of the Divine Blood. And he enclosed his last Will and Testament, which he begged his father to keep within the pages of the Family Bible. It ran as follows :—

‘ In the name of the undivided and indivisible Trinity and under the invocation of the most Blessed Virgin Mary and of my patrons King Edward the Confessor and King Henry the Sixth !

‘ This is the last Will and Testament of Edward Stornington, late of King’s College, Cambridge, and son of Edward Stornington, Canon, priest in the Diocese of Ely.

‘ I desire to be buried according to the rites of my most holy mother, the Church Catholic and Apostolic constituted in the Province of Canterbury. I desire Requiem to be sung for my soul from the Parish Church of St. Giles’ and my body to be laid in my collegiate gown with the emblems of the Confraternity of the *Sanctae Trinitatis* and of the Order of the Divine Blood about my neck.

‘ My books I leave to my dear father, from whom and my mother I entreat general forgiveness. To Ethelred Jasper, Scholar of King’s, I leave the Crucifix in my room, and to Sir Julius Trywilliam, Baronet, I leave my books on rowing. I pray that all such moneys of which I die possessed may be divided between the poor, the vestry and the incumbent of Cherryumpton Parish. My Bible I leave to Mrs. Judbud and to her true heirs in perpetuity. And I desire that of the sums that shall accrue to the Parish shall be paid an annual Requiem to be said for the soul of the Crusader upon the Feast of St. George, and if such a service be not found convenient by the Ordinary of the Diocese for the time being, that the said sum be spent in keeping fair the brass and tomb of the same. Amen. EDWARD STORNINGTON, *peccator*.

‘ *Witness* : ETHELRED JASPER, *Scholar Coll. Reg.*’

After reading and bestowing this precious document, the grieving parents decided to allow their boy to finish term and spend vacation with the Fathers of the Divine Blood, deeply as they disapproved of their Romish teaching. But the boy must come home on his way, and if possible he must be saved from the results of this appalling disgrace. With a heavy heart Mrs. Stornington decided that her husband must accompany Edward to London and pay a visit to enlist Lady Trywilliam's help. Where was her boasted familiarity with the Archbishop of Canterbury? She must know the Ducal Chancellor of the University or the Prime Minister. She could explain how desirable it was that a promising Ordinand should not be smirched in the bud, disgraced on the Temple-steps!

Heavy was Mrs. Stornington's heart, for she knew that the price of Lady Trywilliam's help would be the dismissal of Jeanne. Jeanne was still extraordinarily useful, and Jeanne still adored Edward and mended all his clothes, but it was decided that the Canon should inform her Ladyship that Jeanne no longer encumbered the parish. It was the taking of a strategic position long and stoutly defended in the warfare between these two women. If the fall of Jeanne was like the fall of Sebastopol, Edward had proved the weak spot in the family Redan.

None might envy him his grief that night as he paid formal farewell to the Tutor, who told him cheerfully that he would find rooms next term outside College in St. Edward's Passage. 'And now don't forget if you find yourself unoccupied in the Metropolis that the Gresham Professor of Rhetoric is lecturing in London. It will keep you in touch with King's to hear him. Pleasant memories! Pleasant memories!' And the gates of King's opened and closed as Edward Stornington walked out. He had sent his books home by carrier, desiring to return unencumbered on foot. Down the King's Parade and past Catherine's and Corpus!

The misted moon, thrown out of plenitude by the loss of a fifth, hung like a silk cocoon in the bare branches of the giant elms that grew between the two Colleges. The Fenlands were smoking and spinning fog-tissues against the setting sun. When Edward was clear of the University, he knelt at the familiar milestone which tells ONE MILE FROM GREAT ST. MARY'S CHURCH. It was an old heraldic milestone, tricked in black and white, the oldest in England. Another mile and he would have fulfilled the letter of the law, which exiled him by two miles from St. Mary's. He prayed that he might have power to bear his punishment, and that God might give him his mission, that he might still serve the Diocese and lift souls out of the pit. And he touched the milestone and made it as a witness between himself and God.

At that moment the peal of the Catholic Church fell through the keen air like the drops of a musical meteor. Marvellously comforted, he plodded his way down the Trumpington Road, and his heart was warmed by the sunset, which suddenly coloured to partitioned streaks of black and red, like the *rouge et noir* of the roulette table he had once seen in Julius's rooms, as though the sky were gambling on to-morrow's weather. . . . An hour later he was home.

Edward always remembered the kindness shown by his parents. They never mentioned what had happened, and talked quietly about the Parish. His disgrace had already been whispered throughout Cherryumpton. The local Methodist preacher knew it. Mrs. Judbud had heard him rubbing it into a vestryman. So it would be better if Edward went to the East End.

Edward's only human comfort was Jeanne. She prepared his bed and lit a flicker of wormy fire. He found her kneeling over the draught. She was crying very low, not, as he thought, because he had been sent down from Cambridge, for she knew that it was only a boyish incident, but because she was leaving the Rectory for ever. He let her take his head in her lap, and then he

sobbed like a winter-locked river hastening over the weir at the first warmth of spring. They never spoke while he undressed, and she smoothed his clothes and tidied his socks. 'Sing to me, Jeanne,' he said, and she began singing her little French song, about the bridge at Avignon. And he had childish thoughts and fell asleep. The moon crossed the sky, swinging in a low orbit like a phosphorescent apple whose bruises show under the mottled peel with too long keeping. And the old white owl came out and flitted round like an enchanted white muff, while Jeanne sat and thought thoughts that came to her from she knew not where. The Cynosaure hung in frozen drops of unquickened silver in the dark vaulting of night, and she wondered which of the glittering stars had shone upon her boy when he was born, and she wondered if women would ever sleep with him, and the nails pricked her palms, for she knew that she would love or hate those women eternally. French and superstitious, she supposed that with the stars that light his cradle and the women that lie in his bed a man's fate is told. All the rest is man's struggling or the motion of God's grace. Edward slept well, not knowing that Jeanne would never spend another night in that house. But even less could he have dreamed that it was to be his last night in the old Rectory as well. . . .

On the morrow Edward was speeding on a London bus down the Mile-End Road, while Canon Stornington was passing the two pompous poodle-lions that guard Stratford Place from hawkers and organ-grinders. The aged butler at Trywilliam House swung open one of the doors, and quickly deciding that the caller was not a Bishop, prevented the powdered flunkey from unbolting the second flap. The Canon found himself shivering in front of the static and fog-stained Venus de Milo, who made the strongest contrast to the gaily caparisoned and restless hostess. 'Dear Canon, what brings you to London? Had you been here half an hour ago you would have met the Dean of the Chapel Royal. His hush of

reverence speaking of the Queen is too beautiful. His influence with the late dear Duke was very touching. For many years he persuaded him to give up port and drink light sherry. One of the noblest victories ever won for the Temperance cause! You will be glad to hear that wicked Lady Carbox is dead at last. For thirty years I shielded dear Sir Julius from her attacks. Once she wrote, inviting him to stay with her in my absence. I was in France, but God enabled me to guess what she would do, and I wrote forbidding him. The two letters arrived by the same post. I was staying with that terribly vulgar soul, Louis Philippe. Louis Napoleon never quite forgave me for visiting his rival. He always told me he would return to the Tuileries. He was not quite a gentleman. How uncharitable I am! Heaven forgive me! But that dreadful Lady Carbox! Heaven prevent me telling the truth about a dead woman! . . .'

The Canon explained the minor disaster and acute distress in which his family had been placed. 'Your boy sent down? I understood that he had devoted himself to the Church. I trust Julius was not engaged in these disturbances. And yet it is not so terrible to be rusticated. I recollect that the late Sir Julius was sent down from Oxford—I think for doing something unkind to a badger or a Dean. It doesn't matter which, but it was thought ungentlemanly. Your son, I am afraid, has indulged in common rioting. I trust it was marked by an absence of intoxicants.' 'Oh yes, oh yes, Lady Trywilliam, but can you say a word to the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Prime Minister?'

'Don't mention the Prime Minister to me. He is a traitor to the class to which he never belonged, and he will one day be addicted to drugs. But I can write to the dear Primate.' The Canon judged it appropriate to deliver a sop. 'No changes have taken place at Cherryumpton, except that Mrs. Stornington has parted with her old servant Jeanne.' Lady Trywilliam nodded.

She quickly caught the wherefore. 'Yes, I will certainly write. Mrs. Stornington must be suffering deeply,' and with a blandishing smile she led the Canon to the door. No sooner had he removed his hat from the protection of the sooty Venus de Milo and bowed himself from the doorstep than Lady Trywilliam wrote a charming but illegible note to the Archbishop, begging him to save a promising Ordinand from disgrace, but unfortunately she posted it in an envelope to her dear friend, Miss Ellen Terry; while the Archbishop was puzzled to receive the next morning a letter recalling old days in Watts's studio, and asking for stalls at the Haymarket Theatre on the quaint grounds that 'your sweet voice recalls romance itself.' Edward, whose penal status remained quite unaffected by the morning's work, had made his way into the East End, past Whitechapel full of seething Semites, past endless streets full of broken, twisted people, shabby clothes, shabby missions and shabby shops. Side streets and backwaters suffocated the minute and self-centred Missions. A thousand streams of benevolence poured into the great human gutter. There were Clubs and Halls and Settlements and Medical Depots, where the poor had their ills answered in this world and questioned in the next.

In the saddest and meanest slackwater behind the Canning Town Road the Fathers of the Divine Blood kept watch and prayer. Their parish was difficult to locate, about two miles North by North-West of the pampered East End. Here they lived in a common lodging-house turned into a monastery. Here they kept the Holy Graal in a tiny Mission Church, partly built of gilded planks and partly of corrugated tin. They preached Christian Socialism to a chronic population of underfed and unemployed. They lived remote from the notice of the Bountiful and the beck of Bishops—it might even be supposed out of view of God.

'Welcome, welcome!' shouted Father John at the door of the Community House, much amused at Edward's

scrape. 'We already have an escaped boy from Borstal among the novices. Prison is a good preparation for our daily routine. Do your Cambridge work and try to fit into our Canonical hours.'

Edward was taken to a tiny cell furnished with a plank-bed, a cold-water can and a rough towel, which looked like the scissored quarter of a horse-rug. He unpacked his books and devoutly attended the Chapel. The service of Compline was higher, more elaborate and more solemn than any he had ever attended. The whole community, in heavy black cowls and rope-girded habits, mouthed the Psalms like musical chewing-gum; bowed, kneeled and were censed with incense and blessed with Holy Water like living corpses before they processed into the silent tomb of night. Passing the Refectory, each received a piece of margarine-scented bread and read the notices for the morrow. The fixed programme was as follows :—

✠ HORARIUM ✠

- A.M. 5. Bell. Rise. Matins. Prime.
 6. Angelus. Low Mass (Parish Church).
 8. Breakfast. Terce. Choral Mass (Chapel).
 9. House and Literary Work.
 12. None and Dinner.
- P.M. 1. Recreation (During Lent in Silence).
 1.30. Parish Work.
 4. Tea and Vespers.
 6. Supper.
 8. Compline and Private Devotions.
 9. The Great Silence until None on the following Day.

The special attractions for the morrow were—

JESU MERCY ✠ MARY HELP

The Fathers and Brethren of the Divine Blood are requested to pray for the happy estate of Jim Muggs whose execution at Pentonville takes place at 8 A.M.

Fathers Barnabas and Paul will attend the pauper funerals in the East London Cemetery at 12.

Father John will address the Plaistow Christian Socialist Debating Society at 7. *Subject*: Was Judas a Blackleg?

Edward slept between two blankets, entirely happy. He joined the daily routine with careless joy. The less he ate, the lighter and happier he felt. Between Canonical hours he read the Classics. It was a lurid contrast, ensconcing himself in Plato's *Republic* and Pindar's Chorales in the midst of this putrid Gehenna of London. Hard hours and the soft Catholic ceremonial combined to keep the good Fathers (most of them University men) from going mad. The parish work was lugubrious. The people were sullen and hungry and disappointed. There was nothing of the East End gaiety which meets the visitor in the fashionable slum areas. In Plaistow there seemed to be a slump in slums. Only on Saturday nights the Canning Town Road grew afire with flares illuminating the sale of all the food refused by Greater London. For the poor, fish and fruit were shown on a hundred barrows, and theirs was the cattle deceased upon a thousand hills. Meat was hawked and shrieked and sold in all sizes and colours. An unappetising blue was generally selected for the Sunday dinner of the Community. Vegetables were sold that looked grown in those sooty gardens on the banks of the East London Railway, or horrible and distended as though culled from the roof of the great Sewer which lay in gigantic furrow across the parish. And fried-fish shops poured their aromatic clouds into the red atmosphere of the oil flares.

Sunday had a smell of its own; the smell of the cooked Community dinner mingled with the odour of the Sunday incense, which was only used during the week at funerals. Edward was glad to serve as an acolyte at the sad little funerals of anonymous corpses and labelled paupers, the hapless human carrion which London throws from its live maw. The Community had the privilege of burying

any outcasts who could muster claim to Church Privileges. Burying the dead was one of the Corporal Acts of Mercy, and as the bodies were seldom accompanied by a protesting friend or relative, the Community were free to practise an advanced ritual. Edward carried a smoking candle and a vat of Holy Water, while his Borstal associate brandished a little boat of incense.

Bodies were always waiting in the Mortuary. Those that could not be sorted into Jew or Catholic were gathered, as Father John used to say, to the mother who refuses neither colour nor class nor doctrine. The Church of England covers a multitude of sects. With pious good-humour the Fathers ritualised the unsuspecting dead. The bodies of wizened tramps and refuse-grubbers and rate-paid paupers and harlots, decayed with disease and drink, were trodden into the salubrious London clay to the sublime gestures of Catholicism; sharing in the slow and solemn chant of the burying priests and in the general Mass said every Friday for the deposits of the week. How Edward liked to think they were not the worse for the help offered by a rusticated member of the University of Cambridge! . . . He kept the Rule faithfully, never having more to confess than breaking silence and a plate.

One Saturday remained with Edward as a red-letter day. Great processions of unemployed were due to march East to West, and at a solemn and special Chapter of the Fathers it was decided that the Community should march under a Cross attached to the Red Flag and divert as large a column as possible to Lambeth Palace. It would be a demonstration of Socialist power to the Archbishop and of Church influence to the working men. . . . Funerals were hurried that morning, and by midday the Fathers and brethren were tramping the Canning Town Road. Dense choirs, columns and cohorts of weedy, wasted men shuffled their way, carrying banners of the dull colour of butcher's blood. There were bands every hundred yards, bands playing every variation

between a Bank Holiday tune and a Dead March in Saul. The only military formation was afforded by the Community of the Divine Blood, who marshalled the Christian Socialist Debating Society by fours, while Father John waved a small red handkerchief from a processional Cross at their head. It was an hour before they reached Poplar, slowing the music and slouching their tread as they passed the great Hospital. Edward marched next to Father Peter Bagot, who was the intellectual of the Community. He was a rising biologist at Oxford before he joined the Community, and was supposed to hover between Rome and scepticism. He had had a vogue in his day among the religious undergraduates, who take up preachers like a popular actress, hanging to words instead of skirts. Father Bagot had invented the water-tight compartment theory that religion and science never conflicted because they never met. Men received theology and biology through different senses, like scent or sound. It did not matter what a man believed as long as he never mixed them.

‘Most of these people ought never to have been born,’ he remarked to Edward. ‘The State produces them and the Church tries to baptize them. Biology will have to be supernaturalised some day. At present creation is left to chance. Birth-control will be made a Ministry of State. Eugenics will come first. . . . They will breed the *mens sana in corpore sano* first, and then they will try breeding saints. First for health and then for Halidom.’

This was interesting, and Edward enjoyed his conversation till they reached Limehouse, where the old Church stands like a blinded lighthouse over the Dock edge. Down to Stepney they marched, recruiting all the ragged and wretched, a few more banners and bands, while a wet fog smeared them into colour harmony at least. Father John pointed out the high Church citadels on their way: Father Dolling’s old Church in Poplar and St. Augustine’s, Stepney, and beyond the mast-heads St.

Peter's, London Docks, and St. George's in the East. Mounted police met them outside the City, and squeezed and guided them into prepared channels. Progress became slower, for South London contingents were swarming across Tower Bridge and London Bridge. The main columns made for the Houses of Parliament, but Father John was determined to rouse the occupants of Lambeth Palace. Late in the darkling noon the Community wearily crossed Westminster Bridge. A sprinkling of followers struggled behind the processional Cross. The band played 'Onward, Christian Soldiers!' over the last agonising lap. Lollard's Tower was sighted, and in the falling rain a small crowd of tired men lay against the rails outside the Palace, while Father John with Edward for Cross-bearer rang the entrance bell and asked the servant to inform the Archbishop that London Labour awaited his blessing. It seemed the crown of the Community's work in East London, bringing the poor and disinherited to the representative of Holy Church. There was a long wait, and Father John sent words of cheer to his followers outside. Arrangements had been made for tea and sandwiches before they marched back. The Archbishop's chaplain appeared and said that though His Grace wished well to the unemployed, he could not bless a political procession. His Grace had received a copy of Father John's tract on Christian Socialism.

A look of wintry amusement swam into Father John's face. He looked like an old bear who has been cheated of his bun after climbing to the top of a pole. He muttered, 'He must have spotted the red handkerchief from a squint in the walls. He ought not to have shied at the Crucifix. Right about turn, men!'

And the Fathers, brethren, acolytes and political supporters of the Community of the Divine Blood turned on sodden heels. It was nightfall in addition to fog. Dreary as are all processions in England, the dreariness of return makes the out-setting even cheerful in retrospect. The dispirited ranks were further harassed and cloven

by a large puffing motor, which switched into Lambeth Palace—to receive, no doubt, the welcome of which they had failed. As the car passed, Edward recognised with a slightly guilty feeling that the occupant was Lady Trywilliam. Perhaps it would have caused remorse had he known that she was on her way to procure some mitigation of his Academic sentence. However, her action made little difference, for he was due to return to Cambridge the following week.

CHAPTER XVI

THE COLLEGE MISSION

TEARS tumbled down Edward's cheeks when he set foot once more in the beloved precincts. The College graciously overlooked his offence, and bade him throw his superfluous energies into the Tripos signalled for the coming term. In fact, King's questioned the right of the University authorities to send down any member of the Royal Foundation at all. In old days King's conferred Degrees without enduring the fetterlock of Examinations. That a Magdalene Proctor should arrest and rusticate a Kingsman seemed an act of inter-Collegiate arrogance. In the eyes of his friends, Edward became a buckram hero. Julius paid his first visit to Edward, clapped him on the shoulders, called him a Sportsman, and insisted on proposing him for the Pitt Club. Edward recrossed the College threshold with only two burning resolves in life: first to work to the uttermost for his examinations, and secondly, to start a College Mission in the East End. Whereas every College supported a Parish in South or East London, or at least a Club for Boys or a room where sweated women might eat a twopenny lunch or rest from their intolerable tasks, King's alone was too indifferent to support a Christian charity. Even the representatives of Christian thought and endeavour in the College were unable to find a platform agreeable to themselves or valuable to others.

Edward's first evening was spent in Jasper's rooms. Jasper had been very quiet since his exorcism scene. After causing the excitement, which had stirred the Varsity for nine days, he went into comparative retire-

ment. Examinations were looming, and Father Goode had forbidden personal conflicts with the Devil. Jasper was describing the process of leaving his body. 'Imagine feeling as free as a cloud, and a cloud as big as St. Paul's, and being crammed back into a body as big as a bottle.' Edward mooted the idea of a College Mission. 'Something must be done. King's subscribes to nothing except her self-conceit,' remarked Edge, entering. Edge was waiting for the Fellowship decision. He had written an amazing thesis on the problem of the Bible Prophecies that never came true. They were obviously more interesting than those which were fulfilled. For some time it had been impossible for a professed Christian to win a Fellowship at King's. For a red-hot High Churchman like Edge to join the sacred table seemed unlikely, although his scholarship bordered on genius. Edge threw himself wearily into a chair. 'It's a hard fight, but King's is a strategic outpost worth fighting for. I lay low last year, while you have borne the brunt of the fight, Jasper, but let me win my Fellowship and they shall know the difference.'

'Is Achilles coming out of his tent to join the English Church Union?' ventured Edward. 'Splendid!' said Jasper. 'I don't care what happens in my Trip. as long as I see a Catholic Fellow of King's. You know, they turned down one man because he privately burned candles to King Charles the Martyr. He had to go to Magdalene; and another, for all his wonderful knowledge of wines and Labs., is going to Corpus; and a Christian, even if he sweeps the Classical board, is advised by the Provost not to risk a set-back at King's. Other Colleges are grateful to obtain our leavings.' 'Rubbish!' said Edge; 'the Agnostics will never turn down a Christian for that sort of thing. They are fair. It is we Christians who are not fair. . . . If I am turned down, I shall found a College of my own for boys in the slums.' 'How can they turn you down? You are the only man that ever read all the Early Fathers before twenty-five.'

Edge's quick eyes gleamed through his white mask-like face. 'At this moment I don't believe anybody in the world could hold a candle to me on Justin Martyr,' and with infectious gaiety he began jumping forwards and backwards over the sofa. The little band of the faithful cheered him as though he were clearing hurdles. Edge paused. 'My only weak point is the Apocryphal books. I haven't really gone deep into Apocrypha. Who has, except the Provost? It is a world by itself of Christian Romance, charlatan Gospels, sham Acts, pseudo-Apostles. Oh dear, how tired I am! I have forgotten to eat these days. Any cake?'

'Oh, tons!' murmured Jasper, opening an old tin box at the bottom of which he kept votive candles. 'Stornington thinks we ought to establish a College Mission. He has been staying with the Divine Blood people.'

'So we ought and so we shall,' said Edge decisively. 'I will put up a notice in the Reading-room to-day—summoning a meeting for discussion of funds and reading of report as though the Mission already existed. It shall exist! It does exist!' Edge was walking up and down the room in fierce excitement. When he stirred out of the lethargy of study he could act like a man possessed. 'Jasper, go to the Dean and Chaplain and arrange for a mass meeting of the College, but where?'

'Chetwynd Lecture-room?' suggested Edward.

'No, in the Hall, King Henry's Hall!' shouted Edge. 'Stornington, get ready to leave on the last train to-night. We will explore the ground and decide the Mission to-morrow. On Saturday the College receives our decision.'

Edward had no difficulty in getting an *exeat* from the Dean to visit Town under Edge's tutelage. They reached King's Cross before midnight and set out walking across London. All the way they discussed plans—a Hostel for the bedless, a Boys' Club, or a refuge for street-walkers. Edge suddenly decided they would pass the night in a Rowton House instead of a hotel. They

entered, paid and slept. Edward was too tired to notice anything except the smell of yesterday's charing-soap mingled with the day's suet and the night's sweat. In the morning they rose with the ant, and walked in the dark to St. Alban's, Holborn, where they heard Mass. After breakfast at a coffee-stall they crossed Waterloo Bridge. An hour's tramping brought them down the Camberwell Road to Cambridge House, the centre of University settlement in the slums. From this optimistic float upon an ocean of poverty the self-delegated commissioners plunged afield. . . .

They visited the Trinity Mission, the Christ's Home, the Magdalene College Club, the Browning Settlement. They desired to initiate something striking, something that would appeal to their historical College. The Warden of Cambridge House suggested a House Boat lying in Rye harbour, where a number of boys might be given a holiday by the sea and a course of pontifical instruction from interested subscribers. Edge closed with the offer. It was a question of fifty pounds and converting King's !

That night Edge proposed testing the experiences of the homeless by spending the night in the street and sleeping on open benches before taking the dawn train to Cambridge. Everything became an adventure with Edge. They slowly made for the Embankment, where every bench was full of dormant humanity. They settled in a corner between a worn prostitute, whose price had probably descended from a 'fiver' to the cost of her gin-slung sleep, and a tramp who coughed like a perspiring skeleton and looked across the Thames as though Eternity waited on the other side. . . . Policemen, pedlars and prostitutes hovered in the night. The electric sign of the HOTEL CECIL behind and of Dewar's whisky on a brick tower opposite took the place of the constellations. The parasites on their drunken neighbour scented richer fare and left the drowning ship. . . . The missionaries slouched through Westminster and the Green

Park, down a slumberous Park Lane, past the micro-elephantine Marble Arch into the Bayswater Road. They sat on a bench, off which an outcast had fallen into the thin mire.

Taking this sombre casual as a text, Edge spoke of Redemption and Social Reform. Every one had his solution. Some believed in uplifting a few from one class into another. The Socialist believed in pulling a whole class down. He believed that a few from one class should descend into the lower ranks and voluntarily live as paupers and tramps. It seemed to be Christ's course. Edge had felt and wished his mission to lie at King's as a prophet among the Agnostics. If not, he would put aside his books and live permanently in the slums. He had a presentiment that King's would reject him and the cause of Christianity would fail in the College. The College Mission was its last chance. The Crusader gleamed behind his spectacles. 'I tell you that by my Fellowship King's stands or falls as a Catholic Foundation. I know that I should have the vote of the blessed King Henry. If I become a Fellow, Mass will be said again in the Chapel. If I am not elected, Sunday Concerts and Modernist addresses will last for ever.'

The fanatic faded into the scholar and he said, 'I have looked forward too intensely to living a life of books. I feel the cup ought to be snatched from my lips. You know what scholarship is to me. At heart I believe I am the greatest Agnostic. Gnosticism is the heresy, not Agnosticism. I would never stint free research and thought by an inch. I admire the Lucretian mind that pushes into the utter ellingness of things. I am at home with thoughtful unbelievers more than with the comforting cowardice of Christians who won't think. I feel I can stand as a peer with the thinkers in King's. I have worked every possible day and hour for six years. I am not boasting, but I know my thesis is worth a Fellowship. I know that the question troubling the Examiners is whether it is original. It was shown to an outside expert,

and he refused to believe that a man under twenty-five could have written it. Is it wrong to boast? God knoweth the heart. Well, it is time to wander.'

And the two friends stepped down Edgware Road and across Marylebone past Madame Tussaud's till they stood between the Stations of St. Pancras and King's Cross which have inspired so many modern Cambridge architects. They reached King's by nine, both having made it a point of honour to attend an early Eucharist in Little St. Mary's. In the Reading-room they met Jasper, who announced the glad tidings that the Provost would take the chair at the meeting in the Hall. 'The notice is already on the Notice-board,' he said, 'but the College is in secret uproar. The agnostic party will undoubtedly fight. The hour has come.'

The meeting was postponed until the following week, while the forces in the College gathered towards the storm. Edward devoted his evenings to writing the practical side of the proposals. Jasper promised to propose the institution of a Christian Mission and Edge to second him. Discussion was invited, and of this the Agnostics promised to take full advantage. Everybody continued their studies in the morning, and every afternoon the Lent boats went on the river. Edward, now in his third year, had been asked to coach the second boat.

He found it pleasant to follow the river on a bicycle, admiring the scenery and exchanging courtesies with other Coaches and occasionally uttering words of irony to the crew. Kingsmen responded better to the niceties of sarcasm than to fuller-blooded diction. Edward felt that in a minute degree he was passing on the great tradition of Cambridge rowing. Coaches seemed to speak to generations of rowers unborn, and with flaring syllables to blaze the water's track into the future. Silent and sodden Lent crews bent, swung and tugged at their bidding in all the agonies of the fixed seat. Only the Jesus crews proved cunning enough to grease their

shorts and slide up to their beginning. Edward was thinking more of the College Mission than of the College boat. In religious circles it was understood that King's approached a crisis. At the Henry Martyn Hall midday prayer was offered that 'our brethren at King's College might be divinely advised in matters pertaining to the Kingdom of God.' Father Goode said Mass in red raiment. . . .

The Hall was filled on the Saturday night when the Provost solemnly took the chair between Tutor and Dean. About a hundred were present, undergraduates with a sprinkling of Bachelors and young Dons. For King's it was a mass meeting. The Provost seemed surprised at the support provoked by the proposals. In King's no religious cause could muster more than four adherents. There were always four Low Churchmen, four High Churchmen, four Quakers, Four Theists and probably four Pentecostal Rollers, if truth were known. But the majority were of the sensible man's opinion that no case for any religion was proven. A brilliant band of aggressors held that Christianity could be shown ridiculous or false. The proposals for a Boys' Holiday Camp with definite Church teaching lay in Edward's pocket. He left the speeches to Edge and Jasper as the champions of Christendom.

After an inaudible benediction from the Provost Jasper put the case for a College Mission, succinctly but without applause. King's audiences always listened but never cheered. The Bursar rose and rejected the scheme financially. It was unsound by every law of Political Economy. Mr. Lockson asked whether the boys were to be propagandised with religious teaching, and Edge arose and stated quietly, 'They will be instructed in the Catholic Faith.' The Provost's shoulders moved, but quite undenominationally.

Professor Gow then put South London poverty into terms of algebra, while his arms described State or private charity in abstract curves. He explained the importance of ridding economic thinking of the word Charity. He

suggested as a handier equivalent the formula ' x minus y .' Let x be regarded as the indeterminate force of private almsgiving, minus, of course, the y , which stood for the determined contribution that ought to pass through State channels. He sat down, leaving his solution entirely in solution. It was the lull before the storm.

The next speaker attacked the idea that any Christian expression of the College was necessary. He had obviously sat at the feet of Professor Boggart and read Mr. Brazier's *Silver Apple* instead of fiction. Christianity was only a cultured development of the old Mithraic religions. Why send missions to Polynesia when Polynesian nature cults could be matched in the Book of Common Prayer? The Old Testament was full of folklore, filth and superstitions. There was no distinction between Magic and Religion, and none between cults. Osiris was a Nilic Christ who died, suffered and expected Resurrection as patiently as Cambridge parsons were awaiting theirs. The College Chapel was simply a Museum of Totemism. Communion was the cult of Vegetable Spirits, the divine Corn and the sacred Wine. Christ was the super-Scapegoat of all primitive religions. The money of the College could be put to better service than teaching retrograde cults to the backward classes.

He sat down amid grim applause. Before the next speaker had risen, the Provost was slowly walking down the Hall in Diaconal protest. A hundred pairs of eyes followed his incalculable action. The doors of the Hall were swung open and closed by wondering *gymps*. Then the storm burst!

Edge leaped to his feet and thundered—perhaps shrilly, but with all his soul. This College of King's had been founded by Saints, by King Henry the Sixth, for the education and the comfort of Christian men. During four centuries she had fostered religion and raised priests to the Sacred Ministry. Her soul was symbolised by her Chapel, and no work could or should proceed from her Gates unsealed in the red blood of Christ. The College

Mission should be in accordance with this high principle. The College should give her name and her alms to a Catholic charity.

Filmer, an evangelical athlete from the Antipodes, followed, and demanded that the College should redeem her apostasy. It was dreadful if the College as a whole made no confession of Christ. They were all unconverted, from the youngest *gyp* to—and his eyes wandered toward the door, which had closed on the retreating Provost. It was a disgrace and a slur that King's had tacitly abandoned Christianity. There was less need to teach ecclesiastical catechisms to honest working boys than to convert some conceited young Dons, and he was cried down amid the ripples of pleasurable controversy. For King's enjoyed an intellectual tussle as other Colleges enjoyed a football scrimmage or a street rag.

The next speaker poured thin scorn from the agnostic side upon the pontifical pretensions of a handful of Kingsmen. The nature of the Mission depended on the subscribers, and he challenged a vote. He proposed as an amendment that the expression of the College mind to the outer world should be purely ethical.

Briggs the beautiful rose to second the proposal. Idealism had come to the support of Atheism. Edward trembled with a strange excitement. The amendment was put and carried by show of hands amid a general laugh. King's could always laugh at herself, but perish the outsider who dared turn her to ridicule! Then Edge called for a show of hands for the original proposition. Ten men held up their hands, including the Chaplain but not the Dean, who had apparently been neutralised by proceedings. There was another laugh as men streamed to the doors, broken by a shrill cry from Filmer: 'Whoever is for Christ, let him come to my rooms for prayer!' Men became profane as they sauntered back to their rooms. The College Mission had been knocked on the head rather nastily.

But the College was profoundly moved. It took much

to move King's, but King's was moved to seriousness and amusement simultaneously. The Chaplain was surprised to see fifteen instead of five undergraduates at the eight o'clock service, and to receive a request for an unaccompanied hymn in the future. After breakfast the fun began. The rowing notice with the lists of crews in the Reading-room was surrounded by documents :—

BARNWELL MISSION

Buttered Buns Batten Barnwell's Boy Barbarians!
Will gentlemen interested in this Laudable project
send their names to the College Kitchens?

THE DEAN OF KING'S MISSION TO MOSLEMS

Will undergraduates with a certified hold of the
principle of Monogamy and willing to face the Sahara
during the Long Vacation attend a meeting at the
Porter's Lodge to-morrow at 1 A.M.?

Your CONTRIBUTIONS are earnestly needed for the
support of the Inter-Collegiate Mission to the Fens
for the conversion of the natives from the primitive
idolatries of the Established Church to a truer ethical
knowledge and freedom of thought.

From Granta's icy fountains
To Clayhithe's muggy strand,
From Magog's massy mountains
They call our Mission band.
What though the hayseed breezes
Blow sweet o'er Ely's Isle,
When every College pleases
And only King's is vile?

Edge realised the position, and sent magnanimous word to the Low Churchmen and Quakers proposing the Mission be applied to an evangelical parish. He was

ready to fight under any Christian banner. A meeting was summoned of all definite Christians, which led to the secession of the Quakers and embittered disagreement between High and Low. For a week the mania for meetings pervaded the College. Groups and counter-groups were seen in the Courts assembling or dispersing. Practical jokers took their fill. Every morning the Reading-room was covered with the night's wit. Meetings of *gyps* for the reformation of Freshmen, of Rowing Men for the conversion of Cricket Fanatics, were advertised. A King's Mission to other Colleges was proposed, and letters from Kingsmen who had become Fellows of such Colleges appeared in parody of the typical missionary's letter from heathendom.

Then something burst !

Edward was coming into Hall late, weary with his work on the river, and disappointed that the Mission had failed so lamentably, when the tall eager figure of Filmer advanced to the High Table brandishing a petition. A hush fell upon Hall, and even ravenous oarsmen were fain to quell mug and platter. The College servants assumed the same signs of distress as when Church service is interrupted. The Bachelors threw down their napkins and listened to Filmer protesting against the apostasy of the College. In timid, exultant tones he called upon King's as the Prophet Jonah once called unto Nineveh. The Tutor rose and without a word led him gently through the door. This was really too much. Religion had become ridiculous. No more notices appeared on the boards. The College sighed and returned to normal work. The Provost consulted the Statutes, but finding no mention of a Mission, continued to edit the Sibylline Books.

On the morrow Filmer was found suffering from religious break-down, and was allowed to retire to Ely. . . . The Lent crews settled down to training, and then a strange portent occurred in King's. Hopington entered the Varsity crew. An exhilarated bucketing made itself

visible in King's rowing in consequence. Sometimes the Varsity crew paddled lordly-wise from lock to lock while Lenten crews drew hurriedly into the bank. As Hopington used to pass swinging at Six, the Kingsmen rang cheers on their rowlocks. In tradition there was always one King's rowing Blue and one King's Senior Wrangler alive. The amazing thing was that Hopington was on the way to fill both. The Varsity crew found their feather and flighted to Ely, passed into their heavenly shade of colour, and went to Putney to test their watermanship against the tideways of the Thames. At Cambridge the last energies of the term were given to practice for the sports against Oxford. Candidates for the Tripos never stirred. Two months remained in which to survey and surfeit the reading of three years. Edward made his room a book-lined tub, which he never left except to row. He wrote no letters, read no newspapers, attended no meetings, reading deep into every night with the superhuman energies of youth. Night work acquainted him with the dinful denizens of Cambridge belfries, all that babel of bell-sound in which hours and quarters sound all the year round, in night-time or in fog-time, in the quicksilver of spring or upon the long-retreating tides of autumn sunset. Every quarter was chimed from Great St. Mary's upon an anthem of Handel. There was the sonorous bell of St. John's and the fairylike note of Caius, and on Sundays peals and chimes and summonses clanged and clashed from twenty spires and towers. From the mediæval medley of St. Botolph to the tiny tinklers of Holy Trinity, flight beyond flight, boom above boom, treble and bob, bob and treble, the seriated spirals of the Cambridge campaniles clomb above the unechoing Fens . . . and all the rest of the week they kept stern count of an eternity served by hour and quarter.

Edward was a little upset one morning to open a tract or pamphlet from Ely addressed to the Provost, Fellows and Scholars of King's College, Cambridge: a long expostulation revealing to the world the internal struggles

over the College Mission, full of the bitter self-reproach of a thwarted messenger of Christ, and threatening a campaign in the future. The College read and re-read the pamphlet with a sigh or a smile. A few of the Agnostics personally mentioned wrote not unfriendly letters in reply, which were returned to them printed in a second pamphlet with Biblical comments. The College became distressed, and a Fellow with medical knowledge was sent to Ely.

The Tripos still loomed. Edward worked on with desperate speed and despairing slowness. He suddenly realised that under the spell of Dr. Meleager he had forgotten to read the obscurer Latin books. At the last moment he snatched a blind knowledge of the elder Pliny, Quintilian, Scribonius Largus, Gargilius Martialis. They resembled parliamentary Bluebooks on education and medical science, varied with the proceedings of insane zoological societies. He sank for refreshment upon Horace and Virgil, unread since Rectory days. Horace described the European gentleman. Virgil's pious Æneas seemed no less obviously the first cad.

Edward always woke on the morning of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race with the same sick anguish at heart as on execution days. He imagined the nerve-quelling agony, the icy expectation and paralysing terror was the same in prison or boat-house. Probably it was worse rowing under the scrutiny of thousands than treading those thirty seconds which accomplish an execution. And as Edward once remarked, 'You cannot feel so much pain swinging on a rope as at the end of an oar.' And Hopington had brightly added, 'Besides, the executioner pushes your slide for you.' This year Hopington was rowing. . . . The hour the start was due broke from Great St. Mary's, playing 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' from Handel. Edward visioned Hopington, pale and stern in the pale blue colours, with fingers glued to the rasped oar and his leg-drive set like an engine piston, waiting. He looked at his watch. They must have started by

now. Putney Church must be disappearing and the two crews forging into a river unchurned by other boats, unwashed by the tide. He could see the two tiny pinpricks struggling for mastery in the dim distance as the needle-like ships shot past Harrod's, preceded by the roaring breath of a hundred thousand spectators on the banks, indistinguishable from each other unless a little March sunlight carelessly lit the blue on the twirling blades. At Hammersmith one of the boats was bound to be leading. There was a dreaded eddy under Hammersmith Bridge to avoid, and then came final spurts between the two bridges as coxcraft and strokecraft were added to the sheer skill of the rowers. But the bloody sweats and the vain regrets of that moment only oarsmen could know. They must be nearing Barnes Bridge, the Bridge of Victory, for only once had the leader under Barnes been displaced before the finish. He could imagine the fierce rhythm that made twenty minutes pass like five and the last vain or vaunting spurt as one led and the other followed: the last shuddering shoulder-strokes, the mechanical pumping leg-work and the tiring of gallant hearts. . . . Hopington must have given his last ounce by now. The half-hour struck from St. Mary's like a signal gun. The race must be over. Edward threw down Ammianus Marcellinus and strolled to the Union for the telegram. . . . Cambridge had won! Thank the God who invented Eight-oar racing! Hopington must be lying back in the Umpire's launch, lapped in the peace that passeth all understanding, Edward thought with tears.

He returned to his Latin author and took a lonely walk by the Cam, on whose feeble current the afternoon sun had sprinkled the laughter of victory. The Boat Race was won! the one great sporting event worthy of the Greek Games and of the Pindaric Ode. All else in English sport was passing into commercialism, but none could sell a rowing race or by bribery pull a boat a cubit out of its course. Into so fierce and fair a sport the pro-

fessional could never creep. There was no trade nor trick in rowing.

Edward walked back with a certain sense of splendour. Hopington's success meant a glamour for King's and his friends. He thought pleasurably of the College boatman who lived year in and year out for King's rowing. . . . As he passed Hall, he saw a small crowd in front of the Notice-board. The names of the new Fellows were posted in the Provost's quaint script. Edge was not among them ! Edward's brain swam. He ran round to Gibbs Building as though to announce a death.

Edge was waiting serenely. He knew already. ' Yes ! Lockson came round to tell me how sorry he was and distressed, though we hold opposite views. He voted for me, as did most of the Agnostics. I suppose they thought that my Fellowship would be the end of Christianity in the College. Unfortunately so did the Dean. The Historians asked why I had not read the Apocryphal literature. Even so, I ought to have got it, but they could not go against the Dean on a thesis of Theology. You know what Christians are. Had Athanasius been a Fellow of King's he could not have endured the election of Gregory Nazianzen. It would have spoilt his claim to be *Athanasius contra Mundum*.'

' Well, King's will bitterly regret having lost you,' Edward cried. ' Perhaps, but say no bitter word either of friend or foe. I only say this, Cambridge has not taught me to think ! I say no more.'

' But what will you do now ? ' asked Edward in tears. ' That is obvious. I am going to teach slum children Morrice dancing ! '

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRIPOS

THE vacation was spent with old note-books. The Summer term approached like an over-crowded chariot galloping. Edward snatched the hours. No day of twenty-four sufficed to his tasks. Edward faced a Tripos, some sixteen papers based on the entire range of Greek and Latin; he was rowing in the May boat, and he was editing the College Paper, which made annual appearance under an enigma, *The Basileon*. Others were feeling the strain. A revolver-shot in Trinity ended the life of a despairing translator of Aristotle. Examinees were tempted to throw themselves under the wheels of the old one-horse team. Some went sick and were rallied by anxious Tutors. The wisest slowed their work and walked upon the Gog Magog Hills or picnicked in the Devil's Dyke. Edward was not wise.

By way of relaxation he attended his last lectures. King's he had exhausted. He had long recorded all that College lecturers had to say. He tried the famous Trinity trio again. Old Henry Johnson was lecturing with ponderous and humorous ease on the Greek philosophers. Socrates was the master of those who teach, Aristotle of those who know, but Plato of those who think. Plato's *Republic* was a sufficient rule of life. It was a canon of ethics and education still. His was gruff pellucid talk. Thence to the rival Sir Dominick Webbe on the Attic Orators. Shy, slim, whiskered and worried, he peered around the room as though in search of the lost *digamma* or some Greek accent misplaced at the University Press—or possibly for a corner in which to deliver

a hay-feverish sneeze. With a minimum of elocution he declaimed the ancient oratory, to which his spats lent a modern dignity. He was like a mouse in travail giving birth to a mountain of erudition. . . . A few days later Edward heard that he was dead. The Chair of Greek was vacant !

Dr. Meleager and his rival Dr. Verum were instant candidates. Even in the throes of the Tripos their pupils were roused to rivalry. Edward attended one of Dr. Verum's spasmodic lectures in his broken health. His fine-bearded features hung listlessly and his eyes were closed. Gusts of inspiration broke from him. In sudden dramatic sentences he redeemed Euripides from misunderstanding, revealed and rationalised him in one breath, illustrating the *Medea* out of Lohengrin. He cut out the archæology and stuffing and showed the hidden drama. Euripides was a daring Agnostic appealing to a semi-religious, half-appreciative audience. . . . Then Dr. Verum laughed like a crow ! But the Greek Chair was vacant and he was feeling particularly brilliant. So was Dr. Meleager. So was Dr. Henry Johnson. The Senate House promised a splendid series of Prælections of candidates for the Chair. Dr. Meleager announced that he would stand against the field bar one. The one was Dr. Johnson. Dr. Meleager's theme was the Second Chorus of the *Agamemnon*. The Kingsmen were present, Fellows and undergraduates, and when the Red-gowned pale scholar, whom they loved, advanced before the Heads of Colleges and Electors there was heard the rare melody of Kingsmen cheering a Kingsman.

In architectonic tones Dr. Meleager built up the dramatic scene he had so often visioned in the silences of the night, reading his translation from his restored text like a cadenced piece of Beethoven. It was Dr. Meleager's apotheosis. Porson and Bentley stood beside him at that moment. Brief clapping, and the Kingsmen streamed into the outer sunlight. . . .

The Ascension was a 'Scarlet Day,' and Great

St. Mary's became as bright as a *Cappella cardinalizia* with the red gowns of Doctors, while Squire Bedells preceded the Vice-Chancellor with silver cups impinged on bamboo poles and the Proctors and their minions followed after. A few days later Edward found himself sallying in gown to the Corn Exchange to be examined for the last time. Day by day he faced the dusty blows and probes of unknown Examiners. He was not overwhelmed, as at the beginning of his career. He had a stronger head, and three years of steady reading gave him a range which would have puzzled an Examining Archangel. His head ached during ten days and ten nights, but he was hardened to work with an aching head. Twenty Kingsmen had presented themselves for Classical Honours, embodying the tradition and special teaching of King's. Failure seemed impossible. They included Porson Scholars and winners of Browne Medals. The sound of scratching pens became as acute as the torture of trickling water. A street organ was positive agony, and the Dons in charge had the music quelled. Edward felt his success oozing at the pen-point.

With the worst papers answered, Edward rowed his last course in the May boat with a light heart and a light blade. He felt as one sweating clotted ink out of the brain. The boat ran beautifully over the mirrored water. The blunted willows threw out a delicate green brush and snowed white blossoms through the air. The enormous aspens at Baitsbite shimmered silver confetti. The sky was like plum-coloured lava under a floating snowdrift. It turned from an amethyst drowned and disdyed under water to pure heliotrope. The course over, the Coach complimented Edward. Here was a moment when he could say to himself—Happiness! The May Races were due the next week. He arranged to spend the week-end at Clayhithe with a few note-books, a very cunning list of the rarest words in Aristophanes and a chart of verbal echoes in each Pindaric Ode. Potts's Philology he reduced to four sheets of notepaper. After

training Hall he walked down the towing-path with the twin exultation of his virgin body and mind. Tired yet fresh, every movement was a delight and his thoughts were poised in delectable satisfaction. In a week his last paper and his last race would be over. He loved the tranquil, twisting Cam. Not a bubble marked the oarage of the day. It presented a microcosm of life at Cambridge. The fresh unknown morning, the high noon with succession of oarsmen and boats, their tiny struggles and heated trials, the delicious easies and rests, and with twilight trackless peace and the river flowing alone to the unknown sea. Above all, the memory of great comradeship.

Past the locks Edward looked back at the setting orb which under the pallor of a sudden mist was sinking more like the disc of the full moon than the red-blooded cherry of sunset. Immediately after sunset the moon swelled up rosily red, as though the two heavenly bodies took turns to mimic each other. Under the rubicund moon Edward sat down and supped alone in the little Inn at Clayhithe, finding himself the best of company and strong tea with floating lemon the most inspiring of drinks. Taking Aristophanes to bed, he lay lapped in misty stillness. Under the toll-bridge sped the river of life. Lazily he wondered what his toll would be. Snugly he viewed the dead world of Aristophanes, watching the Athenians pass in pantomime. *Æschylus* and *Euripides* congenially debating each other's demerits gradually assumed the expression and shapes of *Doctors Verum* and *Meleager* as they hurled the naked *anacolutha* of speech at each other's heads. The teaching *Socrates* sailed by in his blanket like the *O.B.*, charming the Freshmen with his conversation and harrying the College with unwanted criticism. . . . Edward was dreaming.

He woke at seven and attended Communion in the pretty little river-side church, which he had so often passed rowing to Clayhithe. The hot sun licked the Fens clean of night mist. He sat down and read the great Chorus of

the *Birds* in Aristophanes. It was heavenly good, and he was surprised at his knowledge of the Greek. . . . A launch moved slowly under the Bridge and a party descended for lunch. Purple and white ribbons denoted Kingsmen. It was a mixed party of Dons and Tripos candidates escaping intellectual strain. Like Edward, most of them were taking a breather between examinations. The first to land were the ageless Dr. Meleager, Briggs, Professor Gow, Jasper and some Natural Science men, who had organised the party to visit Wicken Fen. Edward shyly hid his note-books, and was cheerfully urged to accompany the party after lunch past a lonelier and lonelier country-side. Flags and fen-sedge waved like bright enamelled brushwork. The narrow water cherished reed warblers and a rare kingfisher. In and close to the stream stood loosestrife and dropwort, the pink petals of flowering rush, the white umbels of water parsley and fen-orchis. Briggs was seen scribbling in his Diary. 'For the *Basileon*,' quoth he to Edward, who seized editorial opportunity to collect copy from all present. The *Basileon* was the King's College Organ. It flowered once in fifty weeks. The Editor was self-appointed about a week before publication, and the College contributed skits with hectic brilliance during a few hours. These were sorted and served without comment, for Kingsmen alone understand what Kingsmen mean. Edward was hopeful enough to request a mediæval ballad from the O.B. and a Greek epigram from Dr. Meleager. As Editor his only contributions were the advertisements, including mock appeals from Oxford and all Cambridge Colleges save King's and of course the year's survey of the O.B. All blanks in Cambridge Journalism were filled with what were termed OBITS. . . .

The launch approached a public-house cheerfully labelled '*Five Miles from Anywhere. No Hurry.*' It was decided to land. Edward realised how happy and beautiful a day had slipped out of the lap of the gods.

In face of the common Tripos the Agnostic lay down with the Christian. The College Mission was forgotten, and only chaff reminded Kingsmen of their different approaches to the Universal. After the picnic the Naturalists landed in Wicken Fen, one of the last tracks of original fenland in which the ancient Fauna and Flora survived. A harrier-hawk hung alone in the songless air, sickle-pinioned. Here lived within memory of man the magnificent Great Copper, which had since become more a myth than a moth. The Fen-men had picked the last chrysalis of sleeping fire for the dealers. Here grew the wild carrot on which the swallow-tails regaled their exquisite appetites. Clouds covered the face of the sun, but every time that sunlight gilded the sedge a handful of the sable and yellow insects flew into the beam like golden notes. In the coming shadow they disappeared. One of the party was Mustchin of Corpus, an enthusiast about insects, who could see life through the eyes of an ant or the stomach of a butterfly. He explained that his only interest in King's Chapel lay with insects in the pigeon-muck between the vault and the roof. 'I have found the Pope's Tick there, the yellow and white bug that bites worshippers in Canterbury Cathedral,' he mentioned amid laughter. 'Death Watches and Devil's Coach Horses and weevils live on the Chapel roof as well.' 'It sounds jauntily irreligious,' said Professor Gow, 'but you might write a paper on Beetles Sacred and Profane.' Mustchin's devotion to insects served for his faith. It would have been churlish not to share his enthusiasm for swallow-tails, and Edward helped him catch two specimens, which were transferred to boxes of cotton-wool. Mustchin was one of those who were chafing under the Darwinian tradition. The result of the Darwinian Centenary had been to prove Darwin no prophet in his own University but a god. Mustchin preferred the researches of an Austrian Abbot whom he called Old Mendel. 'It is a very curious thing,' he said, 'but I believe that if Darwin could have read Mendel's papers

on heredity there would have been no Evolution of Species as we know it. Even I studying the *genitalia* of butterflies have come to the conclusion that there has been no evolution amongst them in calculable time.' 'There goes a beauty,' and Edward saw an exquisite floating wisp of yellow silk in a black network, more perfect and perdurable in type than mediæval glass in leaden mouldings. King's Chapel in all its glory was not arrayed as one of these.

Most of the party were weary Examiners or examinees and were content to lie in the thick dry sedge, King's forgetting and by King's forgot. It was a day not richly dight in experiences, but moulded to beautiful tones. Only when the launch turned slowly homeward did the ripple of to-morrow's Greek ruffle Edward's peace. Dr. Meleager sat absorbed in the sunset. The colourless moon interested him as the source and symbol of so much Greek poetry and Mediterranean religion. Edward had a curious feeling that he should not miss a last opportunity to pump Dr. Meleager's wits, and broached *shop*. 'There is a good deal of difference, sir, between the Cam in winter and summer, as much almost as there is between prose and poetry in Greek.' 'Without prose we should never realise poetry,' answered Dr. Meleager. 'The study of late prose helps me weed the glosses out of the great plays. You can read the Greek poets for ever. Simonides was Pheidias in verse, pure Parian. All the great poets were prototyped in Greek. Milton is Æschylus, Wordsworth is Callimachus, and Heine is the Spirit or Puck of the Greek Anthology. When a Greek poet was not imitating the musician, he was copying the painter. Ionic words patch oriental colouring into the *Persians* of Æschylus. His metaphors make the effects of impressionism almost like coloured transfers. You must read the whole of Greek not to miss one point in Æschylus. Grammars are only museums, collections of freaks. Lexicons are the dead burying the dead. But a scholar should keep his own

lexicon as a gentleman keeps his own cellar. Liddell and Scott, however, is the most useful collection of errors ever published. I think I could make ten corrections on every page.' And he looked upward with a shrug as though he expected nothing of Academies, and then, swerving his thought : ' What 's your idea of an angel ? Something like an Athanasian hospital nurse ? I dreamt of one last night standing over me, something between a fairy and policeman. Anyhow, Angel is the loveliest Greek word in the English language.'

Edward listened half-entranced. How much of it could he work into to-morrow's paper ? Examiners would do their worst against him for the last time. . . . The launch glided past the College boat-houses, somnolent and Sabbatarian. Tucked away behind every flagless pole lay the May boats, as thin-timbered as Stradivarius violins and as springy as sleeping lurchers. They waited their last coat of varnish before their Coxes unleashed them for the races. The faint scent of exotic plants in the College Gardens drifted upon eddies of bell-music across Midsummer Common. The moon shone mottle-grey under thinnest white tissue : tissue like the sky-carried spoil of dead Ballerinas or of all the veiled virgins, who have seen the likeness of the Host or perhaps the face of a man in the plenilune.

The launch landed at the Jesus Locks, and Edward wandered King's-ward. Briggs handed Edward some lines he had written during the cruise for the *Basileon*. They were written in the style of poetry coming into vogue. Gruesome and Grotesque were prettily coupled. They read :—

They that go down in boats upon the Cam
To save their rowing style themselves must damn.

For those who ever cross the Red Horse Grind
Seldom retain their purity of mind.

But stones no one need throw upon Glass-Houses :
We all have had our past carouses.

But rowing men they say will do at Ditton
Things that never can be said or written,

And ancient legend tells that at Clayhithe
The folk with filthy otters wive.

To watch the dance of lust on Ely Isle
Would make a long-dead Borgia smile.

Edward strolled into the hot heliotropic night. It became wonderful to be alive. In a week Cambridge would be past and he would have to decide his future with the help of advertisements from scholastic agencies. Would he like to be an assistant master? Would he like to be curate? Would he like to take charge of a small lay-mission? Jasper had engaged him to try Ely Theological College where he himself was installed. He implored Edward to come down for the day, now his examinations were over. The prospect was pleasant to the Catholic-hearted. There was the overshadowing towers and lantern of the Cathedral, a Bishop who, though unfortunately married, wore jewelled gloves at Communion and carried a mitre about the Palace grounds like a lost tea-cosy, and a Seminary based on Roman models. The annual festival took place the following Monday. Edward would be free to begin the march of life, and Ely Theological College loomed like the first milestone.

The last week at Cambridge passed like a dream. He showed up his last sheet with the joy of good conscience. The last scenes of the May Races were the same for him as for hundreds before and after: Colleges and river bright under a June sun; the sober ranks of Town and Gown variegated by the silken dresses of sisterly and cousinly maidenhood, who from time immemorial have been led to believe that young gentlemen exhausted by rowing or mathematical Coaches become apt subjects for romance. The College Gardens breathe perfumed colour. The Chapel organs vie against the nightingales and the inevitable May-week thunderstorm. Examiners in their

white Masters' hoods stalk the streets like Familiars of the Holy Inquisition. Day by day unhappy wights collect in the Senate House to hear the reading of the Tripos lists. Changes were already in the wind, and for the last time a Senior Wrangler was proclaimed, closing the fierce and age-long competition between the mathematical stables of John's and Trinity. The last of the Bards was also due to recite his English Ode in public. And the usual questions were asked, unstaled from year to year. Why don't the boys wear light-blue caps? Do the Proctors really pursue undergraduates with unmuzzled bull-dogs? Is the College Clerk at King's the O.B.? Why is it called a Tripos? Edward took the trouble to find this out. Tripos lists were originally affixed to the three-legged stool in Great St. Mary's Church, printed for economy on the backs of the Latin verses read before the Heads of Colleges. The Proctors wrote these verses until living memory, when there arose a Proctor, who was a man of science and entrusted his verse-making to a Scholar of Trinity, who wrote an account of two undergraduates with a *muliercula* meeting a Proctor who himself managed to seduce the *muliercula* to his lodging in the style of Plautine Comedy. Tripos verses were distributed for the last time in the Senate House. . . . Edward's pursuits and obsessions of three years were ending with a rush. The enamelled morning he spent languorously in a punt reading some of the hundred and one books he had been cut from for three years or correcting the proofs of the *Basileon*. Sadly he realised he was inventing his last quip at the O.B. The Fellows' Gardens were bursting with the scents and gums of Araby. Mr. Tulson was playing a provoking game of croquet against himself. On the bench lay next year's Gresham lectures scored with calculations of last year's excursion trains.

On Saturday the *Basileon* appeared between white and purple covers. It was entirely Regalian except for an interview with the One-Eyed Tout as with 'one in

authority,' and a protest to the Vice-Chancellor for banning Swinburne as a University prize-book :—

The poet softly sang and Europe rang
With cups made white with music's wine ;
But our Vice-Chancellor stands with pious hands
To ban each strong and honeyed line.
Oh tell it not in Gath, the fame he hath,
To endless years a Philistine !

In the comic index it had been found easier to mark the pages on which there was ' no mention of the O.B.' The book reviews were devoted to the promised and unpublished works of Fellows of King's : the Provost's long-awaited edition of the Sibylline Books, Dr. Meleager's edition of Herondas, the O.B.'s Memoirs entitled ' Self-Oblivion.' Edge sent on a postcard a thumbnail guide to the Cambridge Churches :—

St Giles', High.
St Andrew's, Broad.
Holy Trinity, Low.
Holy Sepulchre, Round !
St Clement's, On the Road to Rome !!
All Saints, On the Road to Newmarket !!!

And there was a ludicrous account of what might befall Cambridge in case of a very unlikely German Invasion, and there was a detailed King's Pageant in which the O.B. appeared as Father Camus. The night before issue Briggs dropped a lovely sonnet into Edward's letter-box. The whole issue was sold out from the Porter's Lodge in an hour. . . .

Never again would Edward row for King's. He would step out of an eight-oar for ever. There is no decline in a rowing career. It ends suddenly and spectacularly. The last race is often an oarsman's best. And for that lost harmony and comradeship he will yearn in vain in the years to come. Rowing is a hard sport while it lasts, but when it is over it cuts deeper still. It is the first garland snatched from ardent youth.

Mechanically Edward turned to the river, feeling for

the first time that he must add his tears to his sweat. Beyond the Pike and Eel the beautiful May boat awaited her crew. As in sweven the well-trained men sent her gliding down the river between their strokes. Crowds lined the banks and a hurdy-gurdy grunted tattered tunes in a field of Fair. 'Let her run, let her run, you men!' and Edward never heard the voice of a rowing Coach again. Umpires galloped on the peculiar breed of water-horse provided for the tow-path. Old oarsmen wearing old rowing caps propounded obsolete rowing. Light companies of runners sped behind each boat carrying bell, horn and pistol to warn or encourage their crews. As in swoon and swoond Edward heard the signal gun—BANG! Three minutes more! All down the bank little groups of disembarking oarsmen trembled in shorts. Nothing broke the scene except the bannered query which some revivalists had unfurled on the further bank questioning the salvation of those who passed. Each boat in turn sprayed it with profanity. . . . BANG! the minute gun. Crews re-embarked. The Coaches counted the seconds. Ten seconds more! Five seconds. . . . BANG! . . . The Kingsmen rowed away. The boat behind King's was bumped in the Gut, and Edward finished his last race in comfortable ease. Past his eye flashed familiar trees, the green shield of Grassy, the Plough Inn, the banks stuffed with colourful observation and animated scrutiny. The crew were never better together. A roar of 'King's! King's!' preceded them. What did it all mean? Dream within dream. Stroke after stroke. His was a beautiful eddy, thought Edward, like the kick of a salmon's tail! He imagined that he was a throbbing organ-note in the Chapel, his body the stop and his oar the pipe. Did organ-pipes feel their harmony like men rowing? Was one out of time excruciating pain for the rest? Was the organist Coach or Cox or Captain or all three? How nicely his beginning was coming in the water! He felt a sensuous sinuosity. Why hadn't he always rowed as well as this? He was awakened by

hearing Hopington's voice from the middle of the boat. 'For God's sake give her ten! I can see the boat ahead! We have her! WE HAVE HER!' At the same time the King's dinner-bell began tolling on shore and Edward felt his entrails seethe. From the sweetness of swoond he was replunged into the nightmare of physical fact. They were overlapping the boat ahead. He missed the water with one stroke, but rectified matters by scratching the bottom of the river with the next. Hopington was roaring and kicking like a bull. The boat lurched once or twice, steadied herself, and then there was a pleasant sensation of grinding the boat ahead. A bump for King's! 'King's! Good Old King's!'

That night the crew dined together, not as wild youth celebrating victory, but as veterans resting from their labours. Hopington and Edward would never row again. Five of the crew were going down. It was the parting of friends. They were reminiscent over the fish, laughed with the wine and meat, but after the dessert they wept. . . . They strolled out arm-in-arm into the vasty Court. A faint flare candesced beyond the rectilinear roofs of Clare. 'Hall have gone Head!' recalled Hopington. 'Let's go round and see their bonfire.' Throwing gowns over their white and purple blazers, they walked down the Parade and up Garret Hostel Lane. The air was vinous and hot. No Proctors went abroad. Near the bridge there was a spikely gateway. Climbing on each other's shoulders they blunted the pricks with their gowns rolled into balls and slid into the arms of intoxicated Hall-men. The pretty little Court was aflicker with blazing wood thoughtfully provided by the porters in lieu of College property. Hall-men in white trousers with black stripes danced round the flames like well-tailored dervishes. The Hall was the centre of the Universe that night. They had gone Head—Head of the River. Let the heavens fall!

On Sunday Edward went to Chapel for the last time and dreamed. The sunlight lit the whole building until

he imagined it the empty tomb of the Virgin, for the glass gave an illusion of the flowers which sprang where her ineffable holy body had lain. He rehearsed in memory the windows of the Antechapel: the Virgin's birth like some little divine *débutante* prettily symbolised by the Golden Table fishermen found and presented to the Temple of the Sun; the Annunciation by Gabriel strangely paralleled in the fleshly message of the Serpent to Eve: the Nativity of Christ prefigured by the Burning Bush, all the Marial Epic. Opposite were the Apostles guiding the Church like a Cabinet in the absence of their Queen, Paul disputing, Paul worshipped, Paul stoned, Paul before Nero or landing from a fully-rigged galleon.

Edward's eyes wandered from pane to pane upon familiar figures: Elijah riding his golden farm-wain to Heaven and dropping his glorious red dressing-gown to Elisha; the gorgeous green whale vomiting Jonah to the perplexity of future theologians. In line with the organ the Golden Calf was visible like a totem sign on a ruby pillar, while the Innocents met massacre in a ghastly skirmish of colours. The pale blue Jordan flooded across the next window, cleansing Naaman above and baptizing the Christ below. The Devil, with the cunning, shrivelled face of an old man, tempted Our Lord. The Manna prefiguring the Last Supper fell like white confetti. Followed the scenes of the Passion: the mockery before Herod strangely typified by the mockery of the drunken Noah, while the thorn-crowning was contrasted with the glorification of Solomon. The faded purple dress of the Passion gave way to the scarlet of the Resurrection. . . . Hell horribly harrowed and pasty-faced Patriarchs emerging from Limbo! The three Maries peer into an exquisite tomb of marble heliotrope. Christ with a spade appears to the Magdalene in her poke bonnet and Easter dress. Over the organ the Holy Ghost descends in a triple aura of gold and red and gold!

What did it mean to Edward passing out of the Chapel for the last time? Was life hedged by painted windows?

Was this Legend the cause and crux and key of everything? . . .

On Monday Edward trained to Ely and wandered to the Cathedral for the choral Eucharist. Under the Galilee Porch, that delicate stone flowerage on the mighty Norman nave, Jasper was waiting. Within the vaulting fane Edward passed into adoration. High over the choir hung the famous lantern of the Fens, the great wooden octagon of Alan de Walsingham. The gaunt sweep of the Cathedral was only spoilt and blotched by modern glass, like an antique Greek head restored with gaudy glass eyes. But Ely is full of pain. The shrine of Saint Ethelreda, the lovely casket in which the Fen-men lifted to God the beautiful and incorrupt symbol of English womanhood, is scattered. The Lady Chapel, whose myriad little sculptures once echoed the Mariolatry of the coloured glass in King's, had been dusted by iconoclasts and rededicated without much sense of humour to the Trinity, as though the Trinity wished the broken bower of the maiden-leman of God. . . . The Eucharist was being sung by the students, and at a sign from Jasper that the Consecration was taking place Edward prostrated himself on the stone flooring. A great hush prevailed, and the whole Theological College uttered illegal little prayers under their breath. Edward was roused by a pungent odour which was certainly not incense, to find a charitable old lady holding salts under his nose. This was a little distressing, and he assumed a more Protestant pose during the rest of the service.

Lunch was held in a marquee in the College grounds, swarming with the cassocked students and their ordained predecessors relinquishing care and curacy for the day. The latter assumed birettas, which a written notice in the hand of the Princeps forbade in the Cathedral. High-Church gossip flowed like Holy Water. The ordained were angry to learn that pummelled loaf-bread had been substituted for unleavened wafers in the College Chapel. With lunch feeling swelled, and when the King's health

was proposed, young clergymen toasted the Pope. 'His Holiness! His Holiness!' gasped Jasper, and Edward drained his glass. The faces of the Canons and visiting Heads of College caused morose delight. There was evidently a Catholic spirit in Ely Theological College, and Edward agreed to arrange residence the following Monday.

His last week in King's was spent buying second-hand books on Theology. It was ghastly to read what the Anglican Fathers had written, drearier than dust, washier than water, more unctimonious than unction. He liked Pearson, Bishop of Chester, for his vivid word-coining. He was glad his Greek was good enough for Tertullian and Justin Martyr. . . . The Classical Tripos was read from the Gallery of the Senate House. Haggard men stood in groups to hear their fate. The Vice-Chancellor appeared with proctorial satellites and began reading names and Colleges. Ten Firsts for King's! but not for Stornington! He was in the middle of the Seconds. What a miserable miss! But Jasper took a poor Third, refusing consolation. 'No, old man, I spent too much of my time working for the Catholic cause to be able to honour the College. If I had served my dear old King's as I have served my God, perhaps . . .' and he broke off, laughing. 'I would rather bring you to Ely than get a First. Promise you will meet me there next Monday. I start work there this evening. I don't expect to see King's until I return and preach the Varsity Sermon. Till Monday, *Benedicat te Deus!*'

Next day Edward listened to the Mathematical lists. The Wooden Spoon was lowered from the Gallery to the last on the Honours list, a strange emblem painted with the College arms of the winner, probably rather like the oar that the wise men of Gotham used to steer their boat to sea. Hopington was eleventh Wrangler, and a galaxy of notable oarsmen insisted on carrying him from the Senate House to his rooms, where he challenged all and sundry to scull against him to Ely and run back on the

tow-path. . . . Degree Day came, and Kingsmen received their honours in precedence over less regal Foundations. Edward assumed a hood of white rabbit-skin as a Bachelor of Arts, showing, as Edge used to remark, that the University had registered his incompetence in them all.

Days brimmed with friends' farewells and sad good wishes. From all Colleges men sped into the world to meet success or defeat. Kingsmen retained the interior knowledge that success and defeat were interchangeable terms, and that in life nothing really mattered, only it was not polite though philosophical to say so. A sprinkling of enthusiasts went their fiery way, never to be seen or heard again. And the University was gradually surrendered to the charwoman and the bedmaker, to quiet cats and unclean pigeons. The townee rowed on the Cam in battered skiffs and four-oars. Grass grew where it had not grown for months. The One-Eyed Tout stood like a lonely sentinel on the Senate House steps, waiting to entertain and enlighten the Pennsylvanian Professor or the sweet girl graduates of Oklahoma. The O.B.'s luggage made an ostentatious appearance in the Front Court for several days labelled 'OLIVER BROWNLOW—guest of the Hereditary Duke of Speintopz-Heilmarou.' The Provost stole round to the University Press with the first sheets of the Sibylline Books, found it closed and decided to wait another year. Mr. Tulson took the one-horse tram to the station and a train to Ely, where he was unlucky enough to miss an excursion to Yarmouth, removed from the railway list for two years. Life opened before the new Graduates like a Treasure Hunt or a Crusade. It will be years before it proves to be a Donkeys' Sweepstake, in which the loud brayers and the high kickers and the frothy of mouth and the hide-galled scramble under the urge of thongs or carrots for phantom prizes; in which the Clerk of the Course is blind and the Stewards thereof are unjust.

Edward was still packing when Jasper appeared with

pale face : ‘ Stornington, a terrible thing has happened for King’s. Walter Meleager is dead ! ’

‘ Dead ? But it’s inconceivable. He was walking through the Court yesterday. Then his edition of the *Agamemnon* will never be finished. Oh my God ! my God ! ’ The silly relentless thrill of sudden death pierced Edward. Was it all for this, the carefully garnered knowledge, the irreplaceable criterion of taste, the un-failing eye for Greek melody and beauty, the glory of King’s, gone ! ‘ But where ?—how ? ’ groaned Edward. Jasper continued listlessly : ‘ Somewhere in London, after a cricket match at Lord’s. Twisted gut. Died alone in a hospital. Rare sort of thing to happen to anybody.’ The Inexorable Ones had chosen this weapon to cut down the flower of Greek scholarship. Edward revolted. It was wrong, fatuous, a feeble display of the fatal power. What could be the purpose of removing him at his height, when Greek Chairs at Oxford and Cambridge awaited his coming ? Were the Cherubim in need of his tutorship, or the Holy Evangelists to be taught the Greek they wrote so badly on earth ? Edward groaned angrily at Jasper : ‘ For the moment I do not believe in God. I may be all right to-morrow.’

‘ Yes, we all feel like that in King’s to-night.’

Edward took his Greek Anthology from the shelf and lay in bed turning over those exquisite uncomfoting pages. Dr. Meleager’s epitaph seemed written everywhere, whether it was over the dead Sophocles or Euripides or over the body of Plato that the Greek had been shed :—

‘ Hail, Euripides ! in the black-petalled vales Pierian thou keepest chambers with eternal night, but know underground that thy fame shall be unperishing and like to Homer’s everlasting grace.’

But the unfinished task seemed to demand a sadder and untriumphing note, and Edward found it in the cry over Erinna’s untimely death :

‘ This the sweet labours of Eriinna, so slight for

nineteen virgin years, but stronger than the work of many other men. If Hades had not come so quickly, Ah! what a name had been.'

Dr. Meleager's rooms, full of motionless papers and waiting books, seemed like an Egyptian coffin stuffed with the papyri of lost verses and forgotten poems. A scholar may toil for ten or twenty years making his books his friends, slaves and attendants, turning every leaf and scoring every page, adding to their information or reviving their beauty. Fame, literary impulse, report through the world of scholarship, pupils radiate from one room until the day comes, when the scholar takes some book casually from the shelf and perhaps leaves it open. He goes out, and he returns no more. When he is dead, all his thoughts perish.

Edward wandering down King's Parade met Jack Colley, who asked him to sup at Llandaff House. He was in a mood to be dragged or led anywhere. The Monsignor and Father Rolle would be there. Edward's theological plans were interesting. Did he mind a cold supper? Edward went gladly. Anything to escape the sadness of King's. The Monsignor was courteous as ever, and surprisingly unsurprised by the eccentricities of other converts, who talked in a sort of comic ecstasy. 'Never mind them, all converts are mad,' he said genially. 'You are not mad enough yet. By the way, I have got rather a bomb for the University. I am publishing my paper questioning whether Milton died a Papist.' There was an excited laugh from the others. 'I should think Milton's mulberry in Christ's would shed its fruit untimely this year if your paper were published.' 'Well, it's not certain. There are many behind-scenes in history we shall never know.'

'What?' 'Oh, Mary Queen of Scot's sanctity, Elizabeth's virginity, the name of the Man in the Iron Mask, Bacon's hand in Shakespeare. By the way, I think Bacon must have been Elizabeth's child.'

Edward said, 'I wish you could tell me if Anglican

Orders have any chance of being valid.' 'None at all. I studied the documents in the British Museum for ten years and resigned my preferment.' 'Please prove it one way or another. I am going to Ely Theological to-morrow.' 'You had better go,' said the Monsignor kindly; 'read and pray, and when you cannot read, go on praying. If I can ever help you, I can be found here in term time. Vacations I generally spend underground.' 'Where?' 'Oh, in Rome. I am digging for the tomb of St. Peter. I have traced it on old maps. The wall sounds hollow where I expected.' . . . Peter, Peter the rock, Pierre, the divine pun which God made with the fisherman's name, reflected Edward. Countries into whose tongue, like French and Italian, the pun was translatable remained Catholic. It wasn't in English or German, and they lost hold of the Rock and rejected Peter's successor. Edward was puzzling over two questions. Did Christ start the Roman Catholic Church? Had God a sense of humour? Salvation seemed tied to these. A divine sense of humour explained this world. The Catholic Church explained the next.

The Monsignor had a quiet sense of toleration. He was never shocked nor hurried. He was never disappointed. He was always interested. He was content saying Mass to himself or diving into the British Museum. He was surely of the Eternal Church. He had attained certainty and humour. Father Rolle and Colley began to press Edward. 'Anglican Orders must be invalid.'—'How can a clergyman transubstantiate when he doesn't know what it means?' Edward admitted that there might be some involuntary sacrilege. 'When I was Anglican,' groaned Colley, 'every Sunday I used to go on my knees consuming the crumbs the parson sent flying during Communion.' 'And you know,' said Father Rolle, 'I used to suffer agonies at night thinking of Bishop Glynn of Peterborough and Archbishop Maclagan of York, because they poured away the dregs of the consecrated wine.' Edward crossed himself. 'Don't feel

unhappy over that. It was only a cordial with kind words said over it, and not the Blood of Christ. It is such a relief becoming a Catholic and knowing these things.'

'I think I must go to Ely,' said Edward. 'Don't! you will waste a year,' said Father Rolle. 'I shall have a talk with Father Goode first.' Jack Colley began roaring with laughter. 'That 's the best sign! We all had a last interview with Father Goode before we came over. He is a terrible barrier to Rome in England. He walked round me spitting like a cat losing her kittens. I ran as fast as I could and had myself baptized in the Church here the same day, pulled the Curate out of bed and made him empty a jug over me.' 'That 's the spirit,' said Father Rolle approvingly. 'What shall I do to save my soul?' cried Edward. 'I should go to Ely first. If you feel uncertainty you may as well add to it,' said the Monsignor. 'I know so well what you feel. Good-night, but I hope not good-bye.'

CHAPTER XVIII

ELY

THERE and then Edward set out to Ely by road with a soul heavier than his knapsack. He loved resolving of thought by pedestrianism. Steady tramping cleared his mind by wearying his body. It was a mental emetic for over-study and cram. It was the catharsis of momentary lust. He felt certain that if ever he was uncanonical enough to fall in love, he could cure himself by walking across the Continent. If he found himself engaged, he would break it by a penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He imagined entering the Holy City barefoot. He desired to approach the Holy Cities of the world one by one. Cambridge had been the Mecca of his youth, but now he was perplexed and sorrowful in her walls. She had nothing more to help him. Her Degree led to nothing. If he worked for a Fellowship for ten years he might approach Dr. Meleager's standard. Cambridge had not resolved his future nor taught him to think or pray. He left her hopelessly unsettled. It was agony, for he loved the old Church of England; and as he tramped through the hot night, he thought of the happy little Vicarages and rural Rectories lying in old-fashioned orchards behind elm-clusters and crumbling walls, and of the scholarly men who lived in modest comforts with their books and children during the happy flow of seasons suitable to the Church Year. Such a home he had given up, and such a home he might have made for himself. . . . He smelt riparian water passing a weir, the scent of aquaceous plants and river-ooze, and with tears remembered the Cam and his days thereon.

One thing Cambridge had taught him, the essentials of correct rowing. He knew he had never rowed so well as in his last race. If he stayed up he might be tried in the Varsity boat. He felt he could walk all night with unweariable joy.

A delicious pulsation began at the back of his thoughts. Was it only the glow of bodily health, the wonderful crisp, curling languor he felt after rowing? It was rather ridiculous to go into the world a good oarsman and nothing else. His watermanship was quite useless unless he became a parson by the sea and rowed in the lifeboat. He liked the idea. He imagined himself photographed in the papers as the life-saving Parson in his souwester converting seamen. Edge had said that pit-folk could only be converted by parsons taking shifts in the mines and dying in pit-fires and explosions. He would like to sink on a night of gale wearing his vestments under the oilskins and his hand on the oar. He sniffed the acrid Cam. It carried a memory of green splashes and the long, gliding May boats like torpedoes and fairy skiffs in one. Then he smelt meadow-sweet and the leakage of myriads of suspiring flowers and herbs. Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! . . .

He tramped back to childhood. Youth and boyhood flashed through his overwrought mind like a filmy dream. All his days at King's passed like an old scrap-book. Quaint Dons and Tutors danced the Dance of Death. For him they had lived. They were now all dead, and the next time he sat in the Hall at King's they would all be extinguished like Dr. Meleager, except those who left painted films on the panels like the tenuous shells of summer insects upon boat-houses. Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! . . .

College friends accompanied his ecstatic stride. Jasper his faithful mentor awaited him in the morning beyond the Fens. They would walk again as friends in a Gothic house of God. Then Briggs, who might be the Tennyson of a new age. To him this Fenland was well known in his

search for the lost balladry of England. His features seemed more beautiful than ever now that Edward would not meet him again : the thin chiselled face, the rollicking eyes avid of beauty, the quiet voice reciting his own sonnets, and the queer puzzled look at a criticism as he scratched his fine-spun tumbling hair, hair that Apollo might have kissed. There was Hopington, whom he could not easily let pass from his life, though in rowing they were now divided and in mathematics had never been intimate. He knew that if he ever had to row in a lifeboat a telegram would always bring Hopington to his side. In his heart of hearts he knew that Jack Colley was the one he loved, whose word would influence him and who could turn him in his chosen courses. He loved him because he was so strange. His religious views were as sincere as Jasper's, and Hopington was as good an oar ; but there was something fascinating about Colley. Edward desired to know him for ever. Jasper was always reducing the supernatural to commonplace, but with Colley the commonplace became supernatural. Colley was a mystery among friends. He had no career, just drifted, designed and stitched vestments and invented absurd games ; had no vices, never drank ; coached the Catholic Freshers the Monsignor entrusted to him without profession or ambition. He was an English gentleman, bred to the straining beauty of a racehorse, but having become a Catholic did not seem to think any stakes on earth worth the entry fee. And the astounding originality of everything he said, and his worn-out old clothes and his aristocratic features : the best-looking and the worst-dressed man at the Varsity. Edward could not escape that kind, scornful spirit. Friends and acquaintances lagged out of thought. The places and buildings he had loved sank behind for ever. The morning promised new friends ; and some new building to under-snuggle and love. Colley had told him it saved trouble to love buildings instead of women in life. He thought of the old Church and Rectory at home. How

often he sent his soul, like the white noiseless owl, to dwell there at nights when he was tired and unhappy, and the dear home characters comforted him in his dreams : his mother, who was really kind when inaudible ; his poor old father plodding with lexicon and thorough-bred roses ; Julius the magnificent, to whom Life never ceased to throw successes out of her cornucopia ; and there was Jeanne. Where could she be now ? Gone without leaving address or ripple. He owed her so much. He would like to have her back to help her and tell her how grateful he was, and his eyes swelled with tears. And Mrs. Judbud sweeping the Church ! When he lost himself in space or felt unhappy because of the terror behind the stars or the loneliness, which made him like a solitary goldfish in a bowl, he remembered Mrs. Judbud, and near Mrs. Judbud always stood Veronica. The memory of Veronica's face made him snuff apples, or was he passing an orchard ? Why did she always smell like that ? He would have liked to have found and saved her. He knew that she had gone into the maelstrom of London, and what London was like he guessed from the Bishop of London's warning sermons. He only knew the East End, where people were too poor to be wicked. Veronica was probably in one of those terrible tea-shops that Jasper always wanted to raid, where rich men devoured buns and virgins. Ely must forge him a weapon to fight the world. Tramp ! Tramp ! Tramp ! . . . Buildings and favourite corners of Cambridge took shape before his eyes : the octagonal fountain in the Great Court of Trinity ever dripping water and sunshine, the penumbral gloom of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the lacework Bridge of Sighs behind St. John's, the oriel windows of Queens' glimpsed from the Cam, with the sandmartins flitting in and out of drains, the old ivy-haunted Court of Corpus, and the gate-tower of Jesus, rubine and rhadamanthine, guarding the road to the river. Above all, the Chapel of King's burst recesses in his memory. The window colours glided into their leaden lines. Chinese reds and

sprinkled rubies flashed against the withered white and the faint yellow stains rising from pale lemon to deep orange and finally to that clarion gold, all of which King's glaziers wrought into tints of Heaven and Hell. Green streakiness, violent vermilion and blue inkiness swayed into light violet and cobalt and the Madonna's eternal blue in his eyes. Amethysts and sanguines and heliotropes danced together. But the Biblical characters and jovial angels and Renaissance women and Cinque Cento Saints and Sinners symbolising the profusion of life and colour and religion when England and Italy were wed, all these passed away with the Dons and the *gyps* into the backwash of the years. Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! . . . The soft glamour of daylight crept into the night like water into dark wine. Only one friend survived the night—Jack Colley, whom he had seen the least of all his friends. Different Colleges and different Churches divided them. Yet Colley's alone he desired after three years at Cambridge as a fisher of friendships of men. Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! . . .

The sun was creeping out of the Fenland clouds like a gilded apple bursting untimely in the blossoming of the tree. From a little height Edward sighted a cloud-ship swim into view, mastless and dismantled. The prow was eastward and the huge turreted poop backed against the western horizon. A great eight-squared bridge divided the ship. Windows caught the morning rays with dead eyes. It was Ely Cathedral! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! . . . The Cathedral slept the sleep of the Established and the town slept at its feet and the cloisters slept and the Dean slept and the Bishop slept and the Bishop's wife slept and the Canons slept and the Vergers slept and the choristers perhaps sang in their sleep. Edward lay down at his full length. The Cathedral-ship was now at anchor and the sun floated like a golden buoy in the mist.

When he was rested, he knocked for breakfast at the Cutter Inn, where he had feasted with the crews when they had rowed to Ely. When he had read the names in

the visitors' book and paid the landlord, he arose in his loneliness and said to himself that out of the wreck and uncertainty of life he would keep one friend. In his loneliness Jack Colley seemed fantastically precious. Jack Colley thought Anglican Orders invalid. Perhaps they were . . . and the prospect of being ordained collapsed, but he had strength to turn and walk back without a sigh in his heart or a canticle between his lips. . . . He left the Cathedral like a giant milestone sunk in the Fens. The vergers and the canons and the choristers rose all chirpy with dawn. But the Bishop rose not. The Bishop was dying. Edward tramped back to Cambridge.

The return from Ely left Edward disoriented. After solemnly packing up the week before, he could not return to King's. His only touch with Cambridge was Llandaff House and Jack Colley, and that meant Rome. At Llandaff House he called the same evening. Colley had gone to Hatfield. Well, to Hatfield! though he was tired with disappointment. He was seething with impotentiality. Why could he arrive at nothing, do nothing, be nothing? He must justify his years of study. He still nourished a brooding sense of mission. His heart had compassion upon the multitude. At least he was a good Socialist. If he became a Roman, he would have to give up Socialism, and the East End of London had taught him that, if Christ was not a Socialist, then was His teaching vain. The Fathers of the Divine Blood had shown him that Christianity was Communism in practice. They were the only men living by the Gospel, who became outcasts and beggars and outlaws for Christ. True Christianity pointed to the gutter. To Plaistow then after Hatfield, but Hatfield first. After sleeping his last Cambridge night at the Old Castle Inn, Edward heard Mass at St. Clement's and cried when he saw Father Goode stalking and chanting for the last time. He peeped into the Catholic Church on his way. It was empty save for one twitching lamplight. It smelt as though Sunday's incense had caught in the cobwebs.

Ely could not prevail against Rome. Better nothing than what Colley called Anglican disorders. Whither and whither? As he tramped the dusty road there grew into his mind the vision of the holy city of the East, Moscow! Moscow could stand up to Rome. Rome had destroyed and invalidated Anglican Orders for him. He would turn the tables by an appeal to the Holy Orthodox Church in Russia. Colley had told him mockingly that if he could obtain Holy Communion in Moscow he would save Anglicanism. He would do his share for the Reunion of Christendom. It was a glorious ideal and he barely snatched his last view of the pinnacles of King's. Cambridge lay buried in a florescence of green-enamelled elms with Cherryrumpston far to the right. The square church tower poked beadle-wise through the trees. He would be Our Lady's tramp and troubadour, and he sang the Hours of the Church as he strode. He sang Sext at Royston and Nones at Baldock. It was a weary Vesper hymn that hailed the approaches to Hatfield where, according to Colley, the Cecil family had invented the Church of England they imposed on Parliament and People. He sat down and rested on the grass. He felt as though he could walk to Moscow in the cause of Reuniting Christendom. In his heart he vowed not to receive Communion in the Church of England again until he had communicated in Moscow. He dreamed vaguely of religious processions, of Patriarchs and Archimandrites, of the Holy Synod of Russia and the Bench of English Bishops wearing mitres and copes together. And there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Why not? and perhaps if he united Moscow with Canterbury he might become a Bishop. How proud his mother would be! Edge had taught him that the Twenty-eighth Canon of the Council of Chalcedon equated the primacy of Rome with Constantinople.

He awoke from his reveries at the approach of two figures, one bowed and cassocked, the other Jack Colley! Of course, he had said he was going to Hatfield for re-

treat. 'Jack, Jack!' 'Heavens, I thought you were at Ely. I have been saying the Rosary backwards for the failure of your intentions.' 'I never got there. I am walking to Moscow for my next Communion,' confessed Edward.

'I love you for that,' said Colley. 'This young man has principles. He must stay with us,' said the priest. 'This is Father Kentigern,' said Colley, 'Mr. Edward Stornington.' 'I should be ashamed to come as your guest like this,' said Edward. 'Don't come as a guest. Be our next Novice. We need one.' Colley nodded, and Edward was led away by the enthusiastic pair. To no monastery was he brought, but to a lonely draggled-down villa enclosed by a ruinous garden. 'I keep this garden to symbolise the Church of England,' said Father Kentigern sternly, laying his apostolic boot among dead hollyhocks. 'Enter the House of the Divine Expiation!' Edward entered. The back of the door was covered with texts from Jeremiah, one of which Father Kentigern read aloud to himself. The house seemed a curiosity shop full of battered religious pictures, blue lamps and lurid images. Over the stairs hung a full-sized Crucifix bathed in blue and purple gores with one bloodshot crystal of a dead eye staring through matted hair. 'Real human hair!' whispered Jack, and Edward fell on his knees murmuring 'Jesus of Nazareth *miserere mei*.' 'You must kneel upstairs in the Chapel,' said Father Kentigern, 'where the Community pray.' 'Are there many of you?' asked Edward innocently. 'Yes, seven. Our Lord is here, and where our Lord is Our Lady is, and of course St. Joseph never leaves Our Lady. That makes five, and you are the sixth and there is a Novice cooking.'

They went upstairs and knelt in front of the flickering little night lamp, until the Novice tolled a bell for supper. Jack showed Edward his bare room, a mattress on the floor and a Crucifix woven in a crown of jagging thorns. 'The Father is wonderful. He had a call to found this

terrible Order to expiate for everybody's sins, but nobody stays. It's too hard. I come here for a few days sometimes, but I am always starved out. I advise you not to eat the food, and don't be worried if you hear odd sounds at night. The Father scourges himself sometimes. That's his room. He sleeps on his bier—in his shroud.' Edward observed a wheeled bier across which lay a hair-shirt and long disciplines. With hysteric laughter the two friends picked them up and began curling the knots round each other's legs. 'Weary not, sweet brother, so good for your soul!' 'That will teach you to sit straight in the boat!' . . . The monotonous bell announced supper. 'No hurry,' said Jack, 'Grace here takes half an hour.' They went down, and with the Manual of Prayers laid in front of each chanted a whole Lamentation of Jeremiah.

Supper consisted of a huge plate of yesterday's scraps. 'To remind us,' said the dear old man, 'of the sins of yesterday.' The Novice joined the crust-chewing party, but disappeared to fetch some poached eggs. One egg was awarded to each. 'Every day each member of the Order is expected to commit a special act of sacrifice. For mine to-day I give you my egg,' said Father Kentigern. . . . 'And I for mine,' Edward whispered to Jack a minute later, 'have eaten it!' Recreation in the garden followed. Then Compline and Benediction. The good Father went to bed, for he rose at midnight. Edward was left with Jack, tired and unhappy, yet bubbling with vague hopes and pieties and backboned by an untampered strength. He realised that Jack was the one wonderful friendship of his life. Jasper's was an alliance. Julius was for old schooldays' sake. Edge inspired his keen admiration. But Jack? He hated the word love, but he loved Jack, and it was Jack's influence which had crumpled Anglican Orders for him. They sat conversing together as friends in the house of God long into the night. The snoring Novice, who was as insane as he looked, was locked up in the kitchen. The soft starlight

whitened the land that was once called Our Lady's Dowry.

At midnight they were awoken by Father Kentigern rising from the bier and the sound of his crackly voice. 'He's saying the Breviary over again for all the priests who have said it carelessly to-day,' said Jack. 'You realise that he is one of the saints? He has done miracles. He travelled South America. They understood him there. Once when the Indians came for Communion hundreds of miles, he multiplied the Hosts.' 'What do you mean?' 'Well, there were only a few wafers. But all were fed like the miracle of the loaves.' Edward vented his sighful wonder. His first milestone to Moscow was not commonplace. . . . The slow sound of a thong was audible. Edward shivered. Jack said, 'I generally go in and stop him. He is under vow to obey any member of the Order, even the Novice, if he tells him to do anything. We'll give him ten!' Edward laughed at the old rowing phrase, but he was glad when Jack took away the saint's toy and all could go peacefully to bed.

The next day was a day of special devotion. There was perpetual watch before the altar, which Father Kentigern had made from stones gathered out of all the ruined Abbeys of England. Chips of Reading, Glastonbury and Fountains stuck out like a gigantic ornament made of shells. The day's relaxation consisted of a visit to Queen Elizabeth's oak in Hatfield Park where the news of her accession was brought to her. Father Kentigern cursed this tree weekly and boasted its blasted boughs. He had a theory that when the oak died the Church of England would die, and all his superfluous energy over from converting England was launched upon the unhappy tree. And the evening brought Vespers and Compline and the scraps of the day before yesterday. . . .

'I think I must go,' said Edward. 'If you go by train, I will go with you,' remarked Jack, and they decided to take the night train to London. Father Kentigern blessed them with water and ashes before they left. Jack

talked divinely, humorously and fantastically all the way to Liverpool Street.

He had no ambition except to be alive and a Catholic. 'It was not the love of God but the fascination of the system that drew me.' He had no ambition, even ecclesiastical. 'I wanted to be an Oratorian but they wouldn't have me. Ambition leads nowhere. Think of the Peer who spent a lifetime trying to mate the strawberry with the raspberry and failing of fruitful result ; or the man who collected four out of the five existing Ten Thousand Pound notes and died before securing the fifth ! I should like to bring the French café into England and the delicious Continental Sunday. Mass all morning and games in the afternoon. God never said, Thou shalt not play on the Sabbath !'

Edward absorbed Colley's values, which expressed a distinct attitude to the world as well as a religious position. 'Do not be obvious. Do not compete. Do not coincide. Be pure with the impure, foolish with Professors, and it is worth while being sensible with fools. Among the indiscreet be cautious and imprudent with the discreet. Among the tedious be fantastic. In a Protestant country be a Roman Catholic.'

The London terminus was deserted, save for one figure on the platform. Heavy disguise made Baron Falco recognisable as far as he was visible.

There was an amusing encounter. The Baron was on his way to Capri, where he intended to take his life. 'When life becomes a poison, poison is the only counter-irritant. The Borgia venom, whose secret I rediscovered in the Bodleian, will prove handy.' He spoke with the brilliant insincerity of his profoundest moments. 'I leave to both of you the beautiful words I have given to English. They will be found in my private lexicon. A beautiful word is worth more than wisdom. Give up opinions. Make your mind a house of moods and symbolise your moods in art. Oh, Colley, I am finished. You are an ascetic. Give me your crystal prayers.

Mine are flooded by tyrianthine-coloured sins. But we have both loved colour, haven't we? Offering colour to the inartistic is like washing a bourgeois with wine.'

'I am not sinless, only unattracted,' said Jack. 'There is a Roman red which I confess gives me physical delectation to look upon. But 'ware of Hell. Suicide is the easy way there. The Monsignor says that a mortal sin in every theological bearing is difficult to perform, but look out with your Borgia venom.'

'Hell,' answered the Baron, 'I regard as God's standing threat to the artists of this world lest they dare create not in His Image, but in man's. I may be profane but I hope I am not vulgar. You are always in a state of Grace. That's why you became a Catholic. I never am. That's, I suppose, why I did. I have given the world my sensuality. It was all I had to offer. But I have never been a hypocrite,' and the Baron walked on.

They followed, making conversation in the pink dawn of London summer. 'Artemis and Aphrodite contend for every artist's soul,' suggested Edward, 'just as Satan and the Archangel Michael contended for the body of Moses.' 'Beware Aphrodite!' said Jack; 'ware women, my dear Edward. Life is a twin struggle against Beauties and Bores. One aches the heart and the other the head.' The Baron laughed, 'Women must be classed with Boredom, not Beauty. I cannot grasp them. Born to be slaves, I find they marry and then get divorced for exactly the same reason.' 'What?' gasped Edward. 'To get free!'

'Well, do not be gulled by women. Do not be a Hedonist,' said Jack. 'Be a Hedonocrat,' chimed the Baron. 'Rule and curb your own pleasures lest they rule you. The Epicure and the Ascetic are not really far removed. But for the moment I am overruled.'

'Artemis and Aphrodite one?' chimed Edward; 'but Cambridge does not teach so.' 'Cambridge teaches nothing in its essentials except rowing,' said Jack. 'But I shall weep when I leave her for the last time.' The

Baron had Oxonian leanings and said, 'Never mind. Oxford may be suburban but Cambridge is provincial! Cambridge is grandiose but Oxford is grand!' Jack fired back: 'Our "Backs" are better than your Fronts. Cambridge produced the poets and Oxford prints them!' Edward rummaged for an epigram. 'Oxford, I think, examines men for "Greats," but at Cambridge men are examined for greatness!'

'Well, leave it so, and farewell!' The Baron was off. Jack and Edward parted in the first rush of bank clerks. . . .

Edward reached the Fathers of the Divine Blood that night with no luggage except two books and a miraculous medal. He was presented with a disused and hairless hair-shirt to sleep in. The next day after a general Confession he developed his plan. Father John was delighted. 'A brave idea going to Russia. It would be wonderful to turn the tables on Rome and get Communion from a Church which Rome admitted had valid Orders. And if you go to Russia, why don't you visit my hero Count Tolstoy?' Edward jumped at the idea. The heroes of the Community were strangely mixed: Saint Francis, Doctor Pusey, Karl Marx, Ignatius Loyola and Leo Tolstoy. 'Wasn't Judas a Capitalist?' Father John used to ask in a childish way. 'And wasn't Our Lord Labour?'

It was finally arranged that Edward should go to Russia on behalf of the Community to interview Tolstoy and receive Communion in Moscow. Plans fermented unto reality. A dossier of papers was collected from Cook's Tourist Agency, the British Foreign Office and the Greek Archimandrite in London. The Community itself drew up a signed address to Tolstoy. In return, Edward left his last Will and Testament in their Archives, as follows:—

'Edward Stornington, Sinner and Socialist, a lay-brother of the Order of the Divine Blood and a Bachelor of Arts of King's College in the University of Cambridge,

to the Fathers and Brethren of the Order of the Divine Blood love and peace !

‘ I declare that having nothing when I came into the world I am possessed of nothing in the hour of death. All my books and personal effects so called I leave to Father John of the said Order. My College gown and my hood of Bachelor I leave to any poor boy entering the University of Cambridge, at the discretion of the said Father John. I declare that I go to Russia to bring the holy Churches of England and Russia into communion through my most unworthy lips. If I die on or after the said travels, I desire if possible my body to receive a pauper’s funeral in the East London Cemetery and my soul to be remembered in the prayers and Masses of the said Order. I declare that I die as far as I know in poverty and in chastity and in obedience to the same, and ask forgiveness for all offences that I have done unto my Heavenly or my earthly father. Henry the Sixth, pray for me ! Mary, help ! ’

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A month passed.

Jack Colley came to see him off. They were both rolling-stones. Jack mentioned his own prospects, rolling a cigarette with fingers which smelt to Edward vaguely of incense. He always felt that Jack would have been one of the young men whose state of Grace St. Philip Neri could detect with his nose. He resembled the beauty of holiness. He made asceticism attractive. ‘ I suppose I shall become a schoolmaster now. I should like to join the Benedictines, but they won’t have me, I am afraid. ’ ‘ You seem to have been as unlucky as Baron Falco in Rome,’ said Edward ; ‘ wasn’t he thrown out as well ? ’ ‘ Many are called but few are chosen,’ said Jack. ‘ By the way, the Baron is dead. ’

‘ Dead ! what of ? He wasn’t as old as he looked, was he ? ’ ‘ Well, a telegram to Father Rolle said that he had been found dead at Capri. There was no sign of suicide, but there was an empty glass by his bedside.

You remember, he always boasted that he had discovered the famous Borgia venom which destroyed life without leaving a trace, and that when his pleasures came to an end he would not hesitate. Well, I suppose the hour came. He used to say Suicide was the only divine act open to men.'

'Gracious Heavens!' said Edward, 'that is the first man I have seen who actually took his own life. What happens to suicides?' 'The Church has no pity. How can she? The Spouse of Christ, like Cæsar's wife, cannot incur suspicion of yielding in the least. Suicides lose their souls. But Father Lacordaire pointed out that repentance may come between the bridge and the river; and in Falco's case betwixt the cup and the lip. Only the *Santissimo*, who knew how to create so strange a throw-back to the Renaissance in the midst of English bourgeoisie, knows what to do with it now.' 'If he was mad, it will be all right for him theologically, won't it?' 'Yes, he may have had a good intention. But madness covers a multitude of sins. Fortunately God can see everything, even things upside down. Don't judge us either by our saints or our sinners. They are exceptional. Baron Falco is the sort of creature that Father Kentigern has to do penance for. And remember, if you must try Moscow,' said Jack finally, 'that no man can serve two Masses. One day you will eschew one and join us. In Russia you will find Our Lady, but not the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Son, *Filioque! Filioque!* and speaketh through Peter. The Mass of the Holy Ghost is the strongest in our armoury. I will have it said for you.' . . .

Edward's last letter was to Cherryumpton Rectory, pleading forgiveness and planning the future. If Russia acknowledged his Anglicanism at her altars he would be ordained. If not, he would become a Christian worker in the slums. 'God bless the boy,' said the Canon; but Mrs. Stornington was staring with glazed eyes at the name of the new Bishop of Ely in *The Times*.

CHAPTER XIX

LEO THE SON OF NICHOLAS

ON a dark morning of October about one of the clock Edward looked out of the carriage window upon the glittering bayonets of Nicholas, Czar and Autocrat of all the Russias. His luggage was minute and he hoped in-offensive in Muscovite eyes. In his pockets he carried three books: the *Imitation of Christ*, the *De Natura* of Lucretius and Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, which he had been reading for the last twenty hours. The book absorbed and overwhelmed him. The hero, Prince Nekludoff, seemed a mixture and ferment of himself and Julius. Julius's magnificence and dissipation and his own priggish conscience and sentimental wanderings to save the lost were all there. And Maslowa, the pretty girl seduced in the country by the Prince, cast into prostitution and sent by ways of crime to Siberia a convict, to be followed by her repentant seducer and redeemer, was an idealised Veronica!

It was not only theological trouble but social and moral problems which drew him to the Steppes. Somewhere in that snow-bound darkness wrought, taught and thought that master-mind, Tolstoy. He must remember to speak of him in Russian fashion as Leo Nicolaiovitch. Tolstoy would tell him all things.

A red-capped official passed shouting. A sentry collected Edward's passport. The passengers were herded into the Customs office. There was a swift search for bombs and books. Edward's were found indecipherable. He passed the official scrutiny equally well. Was he a Jew or a Jesuit? No; he felt crooked neither in his

methods nor in his nose. He had come on a plain-sailing mission. . . . Before he could explain he was bundled back into his place while officials began to worry an English commercial traveller with twelve sample bags labelled to Siberia. His agony was acute. He had booked a seat on the Siberian express and his twelve bags were emptied and bayonet-prodded on the platform. In ten minutes the train was due to start. Amid much bell-ringing and stampeding cries he was thrust back into his seat, armfuls of his goods thrown into the window and the train was off. He had possibly omitted bribery, and the best English oaths are no substitute for Russian roubles.

Though sympathising with his misfortune, Edward did not see the unhappy bagman until the train drew into Warsaw station. He was carrying his samples in festoons into a curious three-horse vehicle. A rumour had spread among the passengers that the train for Moscow was shortly leaving from the other side of the town. The railway provided a train between the two stations, but the passengers were induced by porters with philanthropic feelings for drosky-drivers to drive instead. Speeding at a mad gallop over the cobblestones between barracks and cathedrals, over a wide bridge, Edward found himself stuffed with a Jewish merchant into an ill-smelling, straw-lined vehicle like a sledge on perambulator wheels. On the way he glimpsed the unlucky bagman stranded in a side-street, while his driver demanded money before going another step. The excitements and accompaniments of Eastern travel were apparent. Edward had a delicious feeling as though he had sloughed the West, and expected anything to happen. The train journey was renewed. . . .

Slowly he sped across the snowy fields of Holy Russia on his self-imposed spiritual mission to unite the Churches. His zealot eyes admired the bulbous green and blue painted domes of the village churches visible from the train. Delicate gold Crosses shimmered in the sunlight,

each set upon the crescent-moon, symbol of the Virgin's resting feet. It was like a dream in the Apocalypse. He hardly slept. With morning he stood in the holy city of Moscow. Depositing his baggage, he wandered seeking the heaven where his soul would be.

His natural desire was for prayer, and to his delight he found that Russian railway stations were provided with chapels, in which the uncertainties of travel could be tempered by votive candles. He said his morning prayers to St. Nicholas, and began walking to the Kremlin. Sleighs dashed past with one, three or five horses, their inflated and dropsical-looking drivers singing to their horses or making obeisance to the holy Ikons they passed at sacred gates and holy corners. The sign of the Cross was everywhere : in the hurried gesture of the street or in static elevation against the skies. Edward admired the spiritual economy of the drosky-drivers, who drove their horses with one hand while they signalled dexterous prayers with the other. Anxious to give a good impression of Anglican piety, he entered the Kremlin by the Redeemer Gate and paid due veneration to the miraculous Ikon over the entrance. An archimandrite in a black dressing-gown and a brimless top-hat passed. Edward sank on his knees and kissed the chubby fingers extended to him.

The Kremlin ! Edward staggered amid fantastic gold-domed cathedrals, gigantic bells hanging in the clouds, cyclopean ramparts, scattered cannon with the Napoleonic cipher, palaces and porches and something like a huge squashed summer-house of metal. . . . This must be the Big Bell of Moscow ! But the glitter and gleam of the domes ! Some were grown like bulbs sprouting on the tops of jars into long thin flowerless stalks, held upright by thinner threads of gold. Others were like gold mushrooms planted by giants, or huge swollen balloons of oil-skin tied taut and gilded. And through every artery of this holy heart of Russia moved priests and deacons and archimandrites and proto-deacons. The Holy Synod

itself might be in session. How Edward longed to appear before them in support of Anglican claims. The Twenty-eighth Canon of the Council of Chalcedon he had memorised in Greek. That ought to please them and enable him to receive Communion from the Orthodox Patriarch.

He lingered in a haze of happy expectancy, when suddenly the earth trembled under his feet and a booming sound scattered a thousand pigeons through the air. He looked upwards and saw the tiers of the Ivan Veliki bell-tower full of men manipulating the great clappers. Bell after bell joined in the chorus, which gave the impression of a musical earthquake. Some service must be beginning, and Edward joined a processing throng with heavy pole-suspended Ikons entering the Cathedral of the Assumption. The crowd were literally swaying to and fro in rhythmical adoration uttering a plaintive *Gospodi Pamilui*, Lord have Mercy ! Edward bowed unceasingly with them, finding his rowing swing very effective. Then he saw a chance to move forward where there were some seats. None hindered him, and he sank into place next to a well-dressed and thickly-veiled devotee. The bells still throbbed through the air like organ-notes, creating a curious harmony in Edward's midribs. Through the thick Cathedral walls they sounded like the drowned bells of Is under the Breton sea. BIM . . . BOOM . . . TING RING LING . . . BOOM ! BIM ! BOOM ! Against the darkness of the building the mighty pillars shone lurid with frescoed saints writhing against supernatural tones of gold. Beyond the Cupola where a little light passed through the dungeon-slits rose an all-glorious Ikonostas, the grandfather and grandee and verily the god of all ecclesiastical Screens in Christendom : veritable gates of Paradise, thick with silver and gold. And around and above the gates were inlet pictures of the Saints in five tiers reeking with precious stones ! Herein was the Holy Virgin of Vladimir, which, though painted by St. Luke, might not have been accepted at the Royal Academy. All semblance of colour was lost, and through the thick draperies

of pearls and gems there peeped the sweet baby feet of the Christ, blackened by time.

A strange sonority filled the Cathedral as the processing clergy entered the fane, priests, deacons and bishops, amid clouds of sky-blue incense fume. They were clad in cloth of gold, and upon their heads were tiaras studded with jewels. Their thin-bearded features and long unshorn hair seemed designed to give a fleeting facial likeness to the very Christ. One deacon with a voice like an opera-singer and a chest like a bell made the Cathedral ring to his voice like a cup of glass to a violin gut. And the choir sang and countersang like choral artillery from opposing heights. Edward was wrapped in dreams. At moments the reconciliation of Christendom to which he had vowed his unprecious life seemed signalled. But at other times the gulf between the Russian and English Churches under-yawned. He thought Roman clergy and churches and ceremonial blended better with the Anglican, because it was out of the Roman womb that the Church of England had been untimely torn. The scission of Canterbury from Rome was a Cæsarean operation indeed, and Henry the Eighth was Cæsar. But this oriental phantasmagoria, these jewelled Hierophants and priestly Bacchants shouting and chanting, and the servile prostrations to the Ikons, could they ever be reconciled with English rites? He thought of the chancel-rails at home compared to this gorgeous Ikonostas. It was as great a difference as between a modest specimen from Hymns Ancient and Modern and a colour-intoxicated Ode of Pindar. And the phrase pleased him. A Russian Ikonostas is modelled on an Ode of Pindar—heroic and hieratic, in compartments, strophes and antistrophes of colour webbed in gold. The Ikonostas of the Kremlin was the Epinikion, the Olympian Ode of the victory of Christ! . . . He was awakened from his brown study or golden reverie by feeling the fingers of the devout lady next to him moving through his pocket. Her rich furs made it seem unlikely

for her to be a thief, but nevertheless her hand was making distinct advances in the pocket, which held his rouble-case and passport. Edward retained presence of mind. As he knew no Russian, he could not give her in charge. Besides, she might make some more serious counter-complaint. But he could not let himself be denuded of his money and stranded in Moscow. Without a side-glance he dropped his hand over hers and held it tightly until he felt his papers disgorged. The empty hand he withdrew, and then, with a sudden sense of humour, kissed politely before returning to its owner. He avoided her eyes.

Vespers of the Virgin continued gloriously. A dignitary was having his long white locks combed with a consecrated comb. He looked like a huge idolatrised puppet. The ecclesiasticism was intense. The priests were God's dolls. . . . All was not over. There were the tombs of Patriarchs and the canonised. There was the unspeaking head of John Chrysostom and the mummified hand of St. Andrew. Worshippers began to kneel at the simple metal coffins of the undecaying Saints, and priests slid open the slits through which murdered martyrs might be kissed. 'Thou shalt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption' is the basic test of Russian sanctity. Edward felt a cold shiver when he kissed a wrinkled coffin-occupant, but he vaguely hoped it would be good for Reunion. It was more and more outlandish to the Book of Common Prayer. What would his father have thought? . . .

Toward evening Edward visited the city. The vehicles of the street were a joy. A fire-engine passed him with seven horses galloping madly abreast. A battered old carriage transported a sacred Ikon in priestly hands to visit the sick. He boarded a tram dragged by six horses pulling up-hill under the whips and screams of boy-postillions. . . . From the other side of the city he watched the sunset illumine the grandiose dome of the Cathedral erected to the Saviour

God, saviour of Moscow from Napoleon. Like a golden bubble it floated above the streets filled with the blood of the setting sun. At first like a great yellow blister full of ochreous coloured gas, it clotted into gore, and then it sanguified into ruby transparence and remained like a glowing stone of price set in the grey circlet of the world. Night rose like the dew from below until the red dome seemed cut from earth and hanging like a faded symbol of all the Fire and Blood it had been built to commemorate. Edward knew that it commemorated the retreat and death-agony of the French Army. It was the supreme war-memorial even among Christians, who build never so gladly and never so splendidly as when their hands are red with fellow-Christian blood. The doom of the Grand Army haunted Edward from the pages of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*: the slow retreat and torture of so many men, frozen and frost-bitten, burnt alive by fanatical peasants, thrust wounded under the ice by Cossacks, or caught and stamped to death by raving Jewesses in the Ghettoes of Poland. Suffering is only tolerable to contemplate when it is over.

The next day was spent in vain search for the authority necessary to receive Communion as an Anglican straying in Orthodox sheep-pens. Of course Edward could have cheated by dressing up in a stinking sheep-skin like a Moujik and singing *Gospodi Pamilui* through his nose, but he wished to bring back a signed document. All morning he watched the giving of Communion even to babies, who received the Sacred Blood in a silver spoon like medicine. In his anxiety he called at the British Consulate, where he met with gruff contempt and was handed the address of the English Chaplain. Edward felt he had not crossed Europe for that! With some pressure he obtained a letter of introduction to the Simonof Monastery, which was accustomed to the ways of foreign tourists. Thither he trod the dry crisp snow, and presented himself toward evening outside the monastic rampart. Over the massive dilapidated door-

way glowed the coloured Saints, and high over the five interior churches shot two spiral towers. A minor ecclesiastic advanced and received from Edward a Foreign Office passport, a letter from the London Archimandrite, a stamped note from the British Consulate, and a printed copy of the King's Boating Song, which had somehow become mixed with the others. These seemed to convey nothing, until in despair Edward handed a twenty-rouble note with the original exclamation, '*Gospodi Pamilui!*'

Matters ecclesiastical then began to move. He was taken into inner corridors and rooms and introduced to a gentleman dressed like Father Christmas in a light purple dressing-gown, who sent for several Ikons beautifully copied in the Monastery and by signs explained that the rouble-note entitled Edward to one. So far so good. Edward then asked for Holy Communion in his best Attic Greek. Silence and a beautiful bow. Then he wrote out the Twenty-eighth Canon of Chalcedon on the back of his passport. The other queried in Greek whether he were Roman, and all present bowed again. Edward made sign that he was not, and scribbled '*Anglicanos Catolikos eimi,*' and pointed to his mouth. An acolyte with a downy beard brought him some *pain bénit*, which Edward knew perfectly well was only holy bun. In the meantime they had read his dossier, and Edward was taken into a church where novices were learning to chant. And they chanted and sang as Anglican chants are perhaps sung in Heaven. Edward listened to their drone and their piping and the swell of their diapasoned throats, until he felt sleepy and dreamy and careless whether he went or stayed or whether he had a mission. Nothing seemed to matter. At sunset he was politely conducted into the snowy street.

Edward decided to leave that night for Yasnaya Polyana, the home of Tolstoy. With the help of an interpreter in his hotel he negotiated a ticket for the midnight train to Tula. His expedition caused friendly

interest. Foreigners were rare in Moscow, or perhaps his destination was unusual. He seemed to be observed and followed. A mixed crowd watched his ticket purchase, nor was he alone when he said his night prayers in the station chapel. When he stood bewildered on the platform, a voice in English told him to move to the right. A place was found for him. He huddled into a comfortable corner. The guard handed him a candle for reading and not religious purposes. He put his hand into his breast-pocket to pay for the candle. Then into each pocket in turn! He had left his passport and ecclesiastical papers in the Simonof Monastery!—and the King's Boating Song and the Address of the Fathers of the Holy Blood to Tolstoy. His head whirled with despair. The train was starting. Oh, the folly and the futility of it all! God could kindly look after him for the rest of the journey. . . . He dropped back in hapless pain.

The locomotive was hooting with the saddest of hoots through the night. Edward opened his copy of *Resurrection*. The hero had reached Siberia and by the invincibility of love had won back the woman he had ruined. . . . Edward felt disappointment that he had left Moscow without making the test. If he had only received Communion, he could have written triumphant letters to Jack Colley and Jasper and Edge. He could imagine his letter being read aloud at Ely and perhaps printed in the *Church Times*. He might have soldered the wounds of Christendom! But Russia seemed to Edward quite unworried by the religious anxieties of men at Oxford and Cambridge. Russia had other concerns. She was suffering from strangulated Socialism. Her unhappy people were seeking to practise Christianity practically, by abolishing caste and living in common. He had seen political convicts with half-shaved heads herded through the streets, and knew that town after town had risen spasmodically that winter to fall back under bayonet and knout. The people gave him the

appearance of simple sullen folk expecting uncertain felicity from an infinity of misery and despair.

Revolution lay suppressed everywhere and the Third Section of the Police secretly ruled Russia. Vaguely Edward had heard of the subterraneous warfare between super-anarchists and the subter-police, of girls firing point-blank at prison governors, of daily assassinations and daily executions. Everything was deadened now by the all-pervading snow, but Edward remarked the care-free carrion crows hopping upon the telegraph wires as though human vermin alone were the object of persecution.

The slow rocking of the train induced half-sleep. Edward's mind never rested. He wondered absurdly if he was the only person in Russia to care about Anglican Orders. Pope Leo had declared them invalid. Suppose he could induce another Leo, Tolstoy himself, to declare them valid in one of those strange semi-œcumenical letters of his! It was a sleepy idea out of the two-thought of his brain, but he could still repeat the Twenty-eighth Canon of Chalcedon to himself. . . . When he awoke, he noticed the people sitting in front of him. A woman with interested eyes pierced his glance. He failed of recognition until she slowly held out her hand. He knew the hand all right and kissed it, not for the first time. Was she still after his roubles or his passport? he wondered. She asked him in grammatical English, whether he had enjoyed his stay in Moscow and where he was going. 'To Tula!' he answered, and added that he had lost his passport. And then a queer feeling travelled the thread of his spine. He had an idea that she was perhaps in pursuit of something more precious than roubles. No, that was absurd. Only a woman should feel sex fear. Besides, in the Bible it was rubies not roubles. But he dared not slumber near this strange lady.

The sound of their voices did not fail to attract others. Trains, where people unknown to each other meet for the first and last time, gave opportunities otherwise difficult to find in Russia. Serious conversation was a

luxury, perhaps a crime. Edward's business became a matter of furtive curiosity to everybody in the train. He explained that he came from the University of Cambridge in England, to the great excitement of a boy in a student's cap, who kissed him and explained that he was at the University of St. Petersburg, but was going south to earn money as he found books expensive. Edward asked him his subject. 'Chinese' was the reply! He knew a little English though he had never met an Englishman. Particularly he wanted to know whether the police obstructed studies at Cambridge. Had Edward ever been arrested in student's dress? Edward confessed that had occurred once, but deservedly. Another student joined them, also fluent in weak Anglo-Saxon. 'But your Professors, do the police interfere against their lectures?' Edward burst into laughter. He visualised the Chief Constable at Cambridge holding up a lecture by the O.B. and the questions which would be asked in Parliament and the mock Indignation Meeting in the Town Hall. He explained that he was going south to visit Leo Nicolaiovitch and had lost his passport. This interested everybody. The students had read Tolstoy's books but they had never seen him. Why was Edward going? Who had sent him, and what were the chances of a social revolution in England? Above all, had he read the great Herbert Spencer? Spencer had always been regarded as a joke in Cambridge, but apparently he carried weight on the Steppes. Edward asked what other English writer interested them and they said 'Vielde, Vielde.' One of them began quoting *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* in halting syllables, and Edward realised that they meant the divine Oscar. The woman in furs and black never spoke, only listened. Conversation never ceased until there was a great jolt. The carriage stopped dead, advanced on its hind quarters, scraped the telegraph poles and stayed half-way down an embankment.

Everybody got out unhurt. The accident interrupted the journey but not the conversation. After an inspec-

tion of the derailed engine, the passengers collected in a group. The opportunity for more discussion seemed heaven-sent. Samovar kettles were filled at the engine. Tea was made, and the guard and driver, after a perfectly nugatory attempt to mend matters, disappeared into the night. There might have been no accident judging by their indifference. The mysterious lady produced two lemons which were sliced into the tea, giving it that delicious fragrance that clings to caravan-carried leaves. An hour of general but unintelligible talk was illumined by the rising moon. From a neighbouring factory town a stream of visitors approached with a view of joining in the conversation rather than of mending the engine, which had ceased puffing or steaming on its own account. Everybody talked except the lady in black, who preferred listening. Some passengers grew sleepy and retired to rest in the leaning coaches. Others sorted their gypsy bundles and walked presumably to the next station, where a train was expected in the morning. The two students and the lady in black had started walking down the line. . . . Edward joined them.

The moon was still in plenilune. The country, newly starched by frost, lay as silently as the lunar spaces above. The warmth of walking succeeded the temperature of the tea. The engine lay behind them drunk dry. Life never stopped being wonderful or at least unexpected. Edward enjoyed a keen suspicion that something would happen, together with complete carelessness what did. Even nothing was fun. Time lapsed, temporarily of course, and space looked rather indefinite. Crisp and crinkly atoms of snow fell beyond the counting of Senior Wranglers, beyond the sweeping of an Angeldom armed with myriads of mops.

There was nobody in the station. Red signal lights safeguarded the forlorn train, but the officials themselves had gone to bed. They entered the station-master's room, where an electric telegraph was conversing sharply with a grumbling clock. A warm stove induced instant

sleep in the students, who rolled themselves into their cloaks and spoke no more. The lady in black went upstairs and a sound of voices followed. The station-master descended, unfastened a telephone and gave it to her. She telephoned messages unknown to Edward, who fell into slumber upon his bag for pillow. The night had been unaffirmative but electric. Sleep was all a delicious negative.

When he opened his eyes the clock was ticking with the slow satisfactory shifting of seconds from one eternity into another. Edward enjoyed the curious sensation that at the moment nobody on earth could locate him. His self was essentially out of reach and out of knowledge. Nobody could know or care. . . . The station-master had gone. Only the sleeping students lay there and the lady, who was standing on the stairs watching him. He sat up under her harassing stare. She had removed her furs and her outer boots. She wore a silk blouse disclosing a chain of pearls. Her neck was very white and the heels of her shoes were red, a solitary touch of colour. Edward had never seen red heels except in pictures of Louis Quinze and they signalled danger. She spoke with a curious blur in her syntactical English. 'Have you not found your passport?' Edward shook his head. 'Do you think it was stolen? You would not wish the police to find you travelling without your papers, would you?' Edward felt humorous annoyance with the damsel. It was enough to interrupt a gentleman's slumbers without reminding him that she had recently tried to steal his papers in Church! This was an unblushing example of Slav morals. What could she want? He wondered whether it would be wise to buy her friendship. She seemed to influence officials. The rouble-note had been particularly well received in the Simonof Monastery. He handed her another one. For the first time a trace of feeling passed into her face. She returned it curtly and put a cigarette to her mouth. Opening her purse she pulled out an identical note, lit it at the oil lamp and slowly

lighted the tobacco. Thin wisps and curling wheels of smoke passed into the air. Edward felt foolish in addition to sleepy.

She sat upon the stairs, and throwing a keen look in his direction asked him many questions: why had he come to Russia, what did he expect to do? He answered that he had come to see Tolstoy. 'I heard you say so in the train, but what is your real wish? No Englishman would come all that way to visit a madman. Besides, he is a pig. He lives like a peasant.'

'In England he is regarded as a prophet. Many English Churchmen think he is the only practising Christian in the world,' announced Edward.

'Churchmen in Russia have excommunicated him. Do Englishmen like Anarchists? Are they all mad?'

'I believe if I lived in Russia I should be an Anarchist too!' returned Edward.

'Perhaps, but then it might be cruel for you.' She rose, looking through and through his eyes with a cynical but questing smile. 'Who are you?' she asked. 'And why do you come to help the enemies of Russia?' 'I am Edward Stornington and the son of an English clergyman, and a Socialist.'

'I am Sophia Ivanovna, and I am the daughter of one of the Imperial house, but my mother was an English dancer. She was very, very low-born. That is how I speak my good English.'

'You speak English wonderfully. I am sure I could never learn Russian as well.' Sophia threw her wonderful eyes upon his: 'Give me no compliments. Tell me this. What do you desire most in the world at this moment?'

Edward had not played the wish game for a number of years. He felt too sleepy to make an intelligent answer. His head bowed. Sophia Ivanovna seized his hands, and letting her head rest on his shoulder, said again, 'Tell me what it is you most love to have. Tell me and it may come to you.' Edward, thus admonished, reflected and

said, 'I desire most to have power to bring together the holy Orthodox Churches of England and Russia, for I believe that if they were united they would save the world.'

'So? Is that all?' Sophia Ivanovna gave a sigh and observed further: 'I always knew that Englishmen were mad, quite mad.' She seemed puzzled, but interested still in his doings, so Edward continued: 'If the Churches were one, the brotherhood of men would become one and we should all become Christian Socialists. But perhaps I bore you?'

'Not at all! I like to hear you speak. That is why I have not gone to bed. The station-master has offered me his room, but your words amuse me. So you are a Socialist too? Not like this vermin,' and she touched a prostrate student with her foot.

'I am a Socialist because I am a Christian,' and Edward began to pour forth concerning the wickedness of the wealthy and the misery of the slums. Sophia Ivanovna smiled and said, 'Follow me. We will talk where we are alone, upstairs.' Edward followed, with eyes entangled by her red heels at every step.

'I do not find you right,' she began bluntly and confusedly. 'Russia is ruled not by the love of the people, not by the love of God, but by our fear of the people and by their fear of God. That is why so many prisons, so many executions, so many exiles—to keep safe all the others. If the Russian folk rose, they would not be like the English folk after a successful revolution and sink back to their old position. The Russians are simple. They would kill everybody with property so that they might have it. They would kill the Czar, for which I should be sorry, and the priests, for which I should not be sorry.'

There were no chairs in the upper room, only a bed and the inevitable Ikon. Sophia Ivanovna turned the Ikon to the wall. 'I see you are religious,' she said to the puzzled Edward. All was fresh and clean. The selenian light lay like white foam upon a ship's deck. 'Come, you

are cold, but we will keep each other warm and you will tell me really why you are in Russia. I could help you perhaps,' and she threw off her coat and shoes and let his arms curl round her. 'Oh! you are strong. Your arms are like iron.' Edward felt pleased, but he thought shamefacedly to himself all the same—Delilah! But no, she was gentle and only anxious to give him help. Was it too late to interest her in the validity of Anglican Orders? Her semi-royal birth might give her special influence with the Holy Synod. Instinctively he felt that he should respond to her friendship. He did not dare kiss her face, but he leaned down and kissed her stockinged feet. 'Lift me up!' she said, approving his gesture. He lifted her lightly into the air before dropping her gently down. There were very few undeveloped muscles in his body. He felt strong and unafraid as she sank into his arms. They began to slumber on each other's shoulders. He never felt so comfortable in his life, but he could not help wondering whether his position was sinful. If it was not sin, it might be approximation to sin. Father John used to moralise on this subject. For instance, it was sin to kiss bare flesh. It was canonical to kiss a lady's hands when she wore gloves. To kiss her cheek, unless she was within three degrees of consanguinity, was sin. He remembered he had kissed Sophia Ivanovna's feet. But the web of her silk stockings was so thin that the veins were visible, and it seemed a case in casuistry whether they were not really bare. Edward's dreamy speculations went no further, and when he woke he was alone and it was midday.

He descended the stairs. The station-master was placidly telling the telegraph. He signed Edward to be seated, and pointed to the second hour on the clock. Edward nodded and went in search of breakfast. Sophia Ivanovna had disappeared, by an earlier train presumably, but she seemed to have left the station-master with instructions to speed him on his way. He gave Edward the promise of courtesy, if not accuracy, in his directions.

Her authority was mysterious but potent. The students had completely disappeared. A few survivors of the wreck were collected on the platform, while the leading engine could be discerned in the distance. The horizon was white with sun and snow. A few white clouds billowed the edge. One cloud slowly disengaged itself from the others and began to sway very slowly from the engine of an approaching train, which arrived and stopped. Immediately all was confusion. The guard and driver of the extinct train appeared and boarded the new arrival, explaining the causes of the accident or their desire to try their luck again. The passengers joined peripatetic picnics on board. The station-master conducted Edward to a first-class carriage, introduced and left him.

Once more Edward found himself welcomed into a social circle rather than dumped among strangers. Once more his affairs became the subject of discussion, though the only language he could use was a faint French. The name of Tolstoy caused violent conversation, some arguing *pro* and others, Edward judged, arguing *con*. During the slow and dragging day Edward made himself more intelligible by oxygenising his French with a little Latin. Toward evening he ventured to make a remark about Peter the Great, which was received in nervous silence. It was apparently not etiquette to discuss dead or living Czars while travelling in Russia. The sun sank, and a ruddy glow stretched upon the lemon-green skies. The train dragged itself across the plain with a regular languid motion until most of the passengers fell asleep. A gentle sorrow as of days that are futile settled on Edward. He felt careless of progress or purpose by now. Millions of ineffective days such as this were being lived by millions of people around him. He was not sure nor much worried whether he was travelling in the right direction. It hardly seemed to matter where the train went. Perhaps it was destined to go nowhere in particular. Everybody was

friendly, and he was sure of finding a committee to decide his movements in advance. . . . He began thinking in a new way. Good and Evil grew misty and blurred in Russia even if they did not disappear. He knew there was always a chance of their being the same thing, especially if they evolved each other. What was the good of Evil, he thought, unless to make clear the Good, and what was the evil of Evil in relation to the goodness of the Good? And where lay evil in the Good? It was Evil that made Good good, and therefore Evil was indirectly good. Nevertheless Evil could not have started by itself except as a segment or a heresy from the Good. Evil was the rust of Good. The existence of Evil showed a limit to the omnipotence of God. If God were omnipotent, He would not have suffered Evil, but perhaps His omnipotency did not allow Him to transfer equality or omnipotency to other beings. His first creation must be lesser than Himself, the All-Good, and once the sliding scale had been introduced, *facilis descensus Avernii!* all the way down to Evil itself. It was the duty of theologians to locate and of Socialists to dislocate the evil in the world. . . . Edward had failed as a theologian. He looked for achievement as a Socialist. . . .

At this juncture the train stopped in a large railway station, and there was a frank division of opinion, some insisting, apparently for his own sake, that he should leave the train, and others advising strongly that he should stay, perhaps for theirs. Tea was remade in samovars, and a vigorous discussion arose on Darwin. Edward, being of the University of Cambridge, was expected to speak informatively. Unfortunately he had always regarded Darwin as an atheist and had avoided his works. While he was trying to find the French phrase for the *Origin of Species*, the train gave a lamentable hoot and resumed its pursuit of the receding distance.

Edward felt a certain shame. Russians knew all about Herbert Spencer and Darwin, while he, who spoke the language in which they wrote, had never read either,

because Jasper had said they were atheists and not worth reading. The sun flaunted a red flare of futility behind the horizon—like Russia in revolution, thought Edward. He sensed that in other countries revolutions produced fresh settlements and set principles, ending either in a tightening of the stakes or a loosening of sail to the hurricane. But in Russia social change confounded confusion.

Edward wondered where he would be likely to spend the night, for disquieting signs were being made to him by his fellow-voyagers, which, reinforced by the maps they drew on his shirt-cuffs, convinced him that he was moving in an opposite direction to Tula. . . It was an hour before a new programme could be drawn up. When the train stopped, he was urged to leave his carriage. He remained sitting on the platform watching the train from nowhere disappearing toward somewhere, while new friends waved him an eternal adieu from almost every window. Once more a station-master took charge. The mystic formula 'Leo Nicolaiovitch' never failed to work. He was conducted outside and motioned into a sledge. Edward mentioned Tula and Yasnaya Polyana. The driver counted fifty on his fingers. Edward was not sure whether he meant versts or roubles, so he counted forty and held up two twenty-rouble notes, which the driver clutched, and simultaneously whistled two ponies and a horse into a frenzied gallop down a street of forlorn wooden wigwams. Soon they were on a huge road fifty yards wide lined with an enormous rut, into which one of the ponies descended while the others cantered at different levels. They passed a green-domed church with lights hanging in front of Ikons, which received a profound obeisance from Edward. The drosky was like a bath-chair on very slippery gliders, but it was a last link with civilisation. The road narrowed and disappeared while they drove into the starry night. Edward watched for the moment when the different sizes of the steeds would be compensated by the size of the depth of the

ruts. Just as the two ponies had reached higher ridges than the central horse, the driver stopped, and after an unsatisfactory look at the stars, left the vehicle and threw stones at a window in a snow-covered house. Evidently he had lost himself. Edward could not help him, so he sat huddled under his cheap fur-coat feeling lonelier and chillier than at any moment of his life. He began to think of the retreat of the Grand Army.

It seemed an hour before the driver returned from his consultation. He took a side detour and continued without a word. The falling snow had made ruts and roads indistinguishable from fields. Edward was convinced they were crossing open ploughland, and once they passed over a corduroy bridge of logs thrown over an ice-packed river. Huddled and miserable, they reached a large factory town presenting under the moonlit snow some of the scenes of a Borough in Lapland. They stopped in front of a hotel and waited till the owner woke and opened his doors. By this time Edward was too cold to take further interest in himself or in his journey.

He was carried into the hotel and fed, and, feeling an attack of sleepy sickness, slipped his remaining roubles between his socks before falling asleep. At intervals he woke and observed friendly people doing normal things with wooden pots and pans. They treated him as though they expected him and were quite used to arrivals from nowhere. When night had again fallen, they roused him with black tea and blacker bread and led him without a word through the street carrying his baggage. Once more a station appeared, but the station of a large town. Tula it must be. Tula it was. . . . Edward was not asked to buy a ticket, only gently led into a train on the side-line and given into care of the guard. He watched snowflakes by the candle-light burning on his window ledge. Slowly the train rumbled into the night. Two stations were passed and the train stopped. By this time he expected to be expected, and a coachman, heavily dressed with pantomime dressing-gowns, abstracted his

bag as though he had been waiting him for months. Once more a hay-stuffed vehicle received him. Wearily he took his seat and drove through more and more snow and more pine and more birch trees, all as snow-laden as himself and his baggage.

The sleigh halted in front of a long two-storied white-washed house. Two men in blouses came to the door and spoke to the driver. One had a soft golden beard and bade Edward enter. They spoke with hushed sentences and trod the floors in the manner of disciples. Edward was shown into a room used as a children's school and littered with desks and books. There was a rough bed in a corner and a pile of literature, magazines, cartoons and pictorial offerings to the Master. Edward picked up a copy of Stead's *Review of Reviews*. The political caricatures had been blacked out by a careful censor before they could corrupt the Philosopher of Yasnaya Polyana.

One of the disciples returned with an invitation from the Countess Tolstoy to join the family at dinner. Edward advanced with a mixed feeling of being presented at Court and entering an examination-room. The company were clad in peasant-clothes, and Edward felt a poignant and snobbish shame that he wore a tailored dress, one of Moss Brothers' fashionable misfits. It was a clean-boarded and white-washed room, hung with family portraits of soldiers and diplomatists, looking down on the Master, who had made their name known in the uttermost parts of the earth. He himself was standing, a short grizzly figure with a ragged grey beard trailing down his unwashed blouse. His tiny, jet-black eyes looked out like lamps against storms, which had wrinkled his whole face almost out of shape. He was squat, squalid, but otherwise like God in pictures. Here was one whose word carried further than all the Metropolitans of Russia. Here was the little father of the poor of all nations. Here was the far-sounding shield of all the oppressed and the pen, which was more powerful than

the sceptre of the Czar. Here was the Great Excommunicated, who had been excommunicated as Christ would have been had He revisited earth ! Here was the prophet and the novelist ! wielding a social scourge of thick cords with the master-hand of Zola, but a Zola with the prestige of Isaiah and the gentle evangelicism of St. Francis, Leo Nicolaiovitch ! Edward bowed to the greatness of the hour and the splendour of the adventuring which had brought him to so great a presence.

The Master fixed Edward with fierce eyes, and as he spoke, all voices were hushed and all heads bowed. 'You have read Herbert Spencer, have you ?' Edward blushed with self-consciousness of his own ignorance. The best-read of prophets did not press him, however. 'Do you believe in God ?' was the next question, and Edward again stood silent under burning humility. A third question followed, 'Are you a virgin ? You have not gone with women ? No.' The Master kindly answered for him. Edward's blushing powers were already exhausted, and he was motioned next to a place, where the Countess entered shortly and sat.

A medical disciple, he of the yellow beard, sat on Edward's right and explained to him that the meal was vegetarian owing to the Master's abhorrence of animal slaughter. Even the boots worn at Yasnaya Polyana were woven of fibre instead of being sewed with hides. Edward became a vegetarian on the spot and began licking his lips like a connoisseur of cabbage. The Master ate well and spoke from time to time across the table. Whenever he spoke, a disciple wrote in a note-book. Johnson has found his Boswell, thought Edward. Somebody mentioned somebody as a patriot. The Master stopped and pronounced slowly, 'Patriotism is the egotism of the many.' Edward was surprised. He had always thought Patriotism was a commendable virtue. Certainly his father preached in that sense on Empire Day. But the Master continued, 'I say to you that Patriotism is the sin forbidden in the Gospels. It is the seed of war. If God

will not pardon the brother who kills his brother, will He bless the nation that murders nation? He that liveth in the Father hath no Fatherland.'

In the depressing silence which followed, the Countess engaged Edward in undertones. 'Surely you have eaten meat. You are so large, so strong.' Edward confessed it was so, but added that he would never touch blood again. Training meals smote his conscience from the past. 'We would like meat, but we eat what Leo Nicolaiovitch wishes us to eat. In the home where I was brought up there were good carpets. You see what poor clothes I wear.' Edward, devoutly wishing there were a few rents in his trousers, said that it was an honour to live at Yasnaya Polyana and that the disciple was not greater than his Master.

The meal was consumed and the Master retired to his writing-room, while the others surrounded the new arrival and asked questions. Why had he come? where did he live? All sounded futile babble in comparison with the Master's words. . . . Edward was relieved to be summoned into Tolstoy's den alone. A picture of Schopenhauer hung like the solitary picture of a Saint in a cell. There was a spade against the wall, a writing-table and a rough bench. The Master finished the page he was writing and began questions: 'Why have you come to see me? What has attracted you to come so far?' 'I have read your books,' Edward whispered.

'Do not read my novels. I forbid you. Read my philosophy. Before it is too late, I am rewriting my philosophy so that even children may understand and be wise. Above all, read the Gospels. Leave everything else. The teaching of Christ. All my philosophy is there. Christ hated Art, hated War, hated lust, hated the priests, hated the rich. Did He not terribly condemn them? Where did He ever excuse them?' Edward did not know. The gentle Gospel appeared transfigured into a terrible document, socially destructive, individually annihilating, like the thin fire with which God would one

day eat up the world. 'I have read the Gospel and would like to live by the Gospel. What must I do, sir?'

'Many men have read the Gospels,' was the disconcerting reply, 'but no one lives by them. Did Christ tell men to become Statesmen or Generals? Did He tell them to gather money and debauch women?' Edward's soul was burnt in those blazing eyes. He made a resolve never to make money. The Master ceased not. 'Did He tell them to kill animals? Did He tell them to put their brothers into factories and prisons and to chain them and whip them and hang them?' Edward answered 'No' decidedly. 'Then I tell you to do none of these things, but live simply and do good work with your own hands and not the hands of others. Go into the fields and plough. Ploughing, I think, will be good for England as well as for Russia. Be not ashamed to dig or to use the axe. The plough will not hurt your brother.'

The heavy wine of Utopianism raced through Edward's brain. He acquiesced in every word of the Prophet, eagerly, faithfully, longingly. At last he had met the Truth or an uncompromising sayer of the Truth. His mission in life clearly was to become a disciple and to spread the message of Leo Nicolaiovitch through London. He explained the manner of his life there. 'Do you live among the poor?' asked the Master.

'Yes, sir, when I am not at the University. Should I live in the country and plough or return to the town?'

'You must do what you find in the Gospel. Listen not to me. Do not imitate me. My message is to Russia. England I do not understand. It is free and wishes to be Christian and it has given the world Darwin and Herbert Spencer. Yet Englishmen wish to conquer and kill black peoples and the farmers in South Africa. That is wicked. That is against Christ, is it not?'

Edward confessed that it must be, remembering guiltily a sermon his father had preached against President Kruger, comparing the Uitlanders in the Transvaal to the Israelites in Egypt. . . . 'Remember, my dear brother,

that richness is evil in itself. Money means slaves. Militarism—but you have not that in England—is slavery. Money and Militarism show the triumph of the old Roman Empire over Christ. Christ was so poor. Christ was a peasant. Christ hurt no man. Christ loved other peoples besides the Jews. Christ founded a community upon earth, in which all men should love and work for each other, but the Churches are sold to Cæsar. But do not resist Cæsar. Unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. Do not resist the sword. They that take the sword shall perish by the sword. It is plain. How think you? Yet they do not obey Christ to-day. They use evil to resist evil. Do not resist evil. Only God can resist evil. You are not God. I am not God.'

To all these propositions Edward bowed as self-evident, and only asked if things were better in Russia than in England, where the Church of Christ was tied to the State, and Cæsar, in the person of King Edward the Seventh, was the unblushing head of the Church. 'Yes,' said the Master. 'Do you see that picture? That will show you what is always wrong with Russia.'

Edward turned his eyes on a contemporary engraving of a scene from Russian Life, an Orthodox priest in tiara and vestments blessing a new Public House amid clouds of incense. Edward could not imagine Father John blessing a Gin Palace in the Mile End Road. Decidedly something was wrong with the Russian Church. In a nutshell, Vodka, the vile spirit of drink, and the consecrated wine of Mass were equally Government monopolies. It was not much better in England, where the State floated on drink taxes, and the Chalice of the Divine Blood was under State patronage as long as the Church was established. When the Master dismissed him he returned to his room and wrestled deep into the night in prayer. . . . And the icy flakes fell from heaven and the snow lay like wool over all the Russias.

Edward rose while it was yet dark and groped for his

clothes among the school-desks. The first dawn had not shimmered through the pine-trees. It was terribly cold. He wandered into the hall. The front door opened and a heavy figure shook heavy snow from heavier boots. It was his host returning after an early bout of work on the farm. No wonder the aristocrat possessed the iron constitution necessary to write those unending novels. He had buckled on a peasant's energy and health. . . . And so the days passed between the fields and the study. In the evenings the Master spoke to his disciples, of whom Edward was already the most faithful and fanatical. He was living in the high light of certainties and eternities. How his thoughts ran! Compared to Leo Nicolaiovitch, Edward's old teachers seemed tawdry. Even Oliver Brownlow was fatuous, and nobody in Russia seemed interested in Peter the Great. Even Father John, who lived as near to Christ as the Church of England would permit, was narrowed by love of ritualism. No Christians dared live so sternly and evangelically as this terrible old man of the Steppes. How simple it was to shed everything and live like Christ as an outcast, a labourer, a pariah and occasionally as a fearless contradictor. It saved the trouble of compromising the stark Gospel with the comforts of a clergyman, or worse still of an English gentleman. A country Rectory and a University degree were qualifications to be a gentleman. What an arrogance all gentility was! Christ Himself suffered from a stigma of birth and was so declassed that He lived among sinners and harlots. Christ would not have been thought a proper person to open a Diocesan Bazaar. Old ladies would have withdrawn their subscriptions. But Christ would have sent Veronica into Heaven in front of the whole Bishops' Bench. Christ would have been happy at Yasnaya Polyana. Leo Nicolaiovitch championed the castaway women, even to chivalrous phantasy in *Resurrection*. Edward thought it might be his mission to return to London and abolish Prostitution. . . .

In the afternoons Edward went for walks with the medical disciple, who was a little jealous of a stranger, and begged Edward to write down anything the Master communicated. So Edward joined the note-takers. And day alike followed day. Every day was calm with the brooding of that great master-spirit, but there were signs of the national ferment. The Master sometimes showed himself distressed by his correspondence from different parts of Russia. One afternoon he took Edward with him through his village. It was a strange gulf from the rectorial visitations of Cherryumpton. . . . Suddenly a crowd of ragged, haggard men burst through the bushes, waved sticks and uttered sounds of menace or hunger. Leo Nicolaiovitch said no word. Others were visibly removing and eating vegetables from an out-house belonging to the Philosopher. At first Edward mistook them for fanatical vegetarians determined to put the Tolstoyan teaching into practice at all costs. They turned out to be starving revolutionaries from Tula, marching through the country in the pathetic hope of appealing to the Czar against the Czar's servants. The disciples and serving brothers arrived from the house and were obviously dilemmatised between keeping their Master's vegetables or his commandments. All looked toward Leo Nicolaiovitch, who made a single gesture of non-resistance and walked away. Edward wondered whether these starving creatures would eat his trial pair of vegetarian boots before they were satisfied.

In the evening there was a greater flutter in the cotes of peace. The arrival of mounted soldiers and infantry from Tula was announced, to the Master's real dissatisfaction. Who had betrayed him? Some nervous friend must have telegraphed that the house of Leo Nicolaiovitch was being looted, and the military Governor, who was a secret admirer of the old man and knew that the Czar would charge him with his safety, had sent troops. The situation needed a firm protest. Accompanied by his disciples, the Master went down to the garden where

a hedge of bayonets appeared between his supposed property and the outer world.

Edward watched to see how the Master would handle the military situation. Tolstoy was speaking to the soldiers fraternally and kindly. They must not hurt their brothers. Christ came to make them all brothers. They would not like to act against the teaching of Christ. As for the vegetables, they could have the remainder. He needed no protection. Only in love could men grow and share the fruits of the earth. He bade them love each other and love their officers. 'We will love our brothers, Leo son of Nicholas!' soldiers cried aloud. Roughly conscripted and torn from distant provinces, they had never heard a nobleman of the officer class speak kindly to them. The scene was sublime. Edward burst into tears.

The Master put his hand on Edward's shoulders and said, 'You are sad, but I am sadder. All my life has been a contradiction and a struggle to be what I teach. It is easier, I find, to abolish carpets than soldiers. But the day will come when there will be a choice. Christians must give up their sword or fall upon it. They who take the sword with the sanction of the Christian Church and swear to slay their brothers have solemnly renounced Christ. They may think they are just. They may know no better, but they must not call themselves Christian. During the last century thirty millions of men have perished in wars, and I say that in the century that is now with us even more will perish.'

'Can nothing save them, Master?' asked Edward, with a sense of cosmic alarm. 'Only to follow the Sermon which was given from the Mount,' answered the Master. 'To meet evil with evil is to fight fire with fire. It has come to this. I do not speak to boast. Europe must choose between me and the bayonets.' . . . And Leo the son of Nicholas was not seen by his disciples again that evening.

Edward felt that a severe crisis in his life coincided

with his stay at Yasnaya Polyana. His Church mission had been an obvious failure. The Holy Synod had taken no notice of his appeal. He had asked for Communion and they had given him a bun. He would have preferred the stones of martyrdom. After staying under Tolstoy's roof he felt that he would be compromised in Orthodox eyes. He remained a Christian Socialist, and his belief had been confirmed in the most wonderful way by all he had heard and seen while living with the Master. He had a distinct message to carry back to England, and he knew that the Community in Plaistow would do their best to help him carry it into action. After all, they disliked Bishops just as much as Tolstoy did. There were no Bishops at the Sermon on the Mount or at the Crucifixion. . . . The time for departure came. For the last time Tolstoy admitted him into his work-room, and when he had written Edward's name and his own on an old photograph of himself, he said a few last words, bidding him avoid the sin of property and live simply like the poor. The woman in the street was his sister and every thief was his brother. They had both accompanied Christ at the Cross, unlike the absent Judge and the Centurion and the rich man. For the last time Edward was listening to the simple monotony of the Master's message. ' . . . Love all men. Love only will help you to help others. Civilisation is the contradiction of love. Hear me. I am old. I have lived very long and I have done much evil. I was a soldier at Sebastopol. I helped to kill your fathers who were my brothers. I have been vain to be thought a writer. I have lived with women. I have debauched them. Go and do none of these things and you will please your Heavenly Father. Farewell ! '

It was the hour of parting indeed. The golden-bearded doctor led Edward to the door, where the same sleigh was waiting to take him to the station. Without a final word he seated himself. The dropsical-looking driver began whistling and whispering to his horses with

the usual exciting results. In the background of the doorway a figure approached, stood for a moment without a word or a gesture and turned away. It was a grand figure and yet grotesque, with flaming eyes and shrunken shoulder-blades, with grey hair moving in the draught of icy air coming from the night. Leo the son of Nicholas ! Was he magnificent or misshapen ? He at least had faced life steadily and seen life whole, and he had not flinched to live the answer that he had given to all flesh living. Leo the son of Nicholas !

CHAPTER XX

ENVOY

ONCE again Edward found himself passing through Moscow. He had an afternoon before he caught the night train to St. Petersburg. He wandered from church to church amid flights of sacred pigeons. What the robins and swallows were to England, the pigeons were a hundredfold to Russia, for the dove was the form taken by the Holy Ghost ! a naïve and logical reflection, which seldom seemed to occur to the Christian nation that invented pigeon-shooting. . . . All night in the train.

In the morning he reached St. Petersburg, the strange modern city built like Venice upon piles, because a land-locked Czar had hankered for the sea. Along the banks of the Neva were the palaces, into which Peter the Great dragooned the Muscovite nobility. Edward visited the tombs of the Czars in the fortress church of Peter and Paul, besides attending service in the Cathedral of Saint Isaac. Under mighty columns of green malachite cut by convict labour in the bowels of the Urals Orthodox priests were chanting their strange and lovely Liturgy behind closing and opening doors, wreathed with torrents of bright incense smoke. Their long locks hung over their blue and silver copes like Van Dyck pictures of the Caroline cavaliers. The Ikonostas concealed the secret acts of the Greek Mass. It was a difficult Mass to follow, and the priest carrying the Sacred Elements on his head resembled a conjurer. An old Patriarch was brought out to bless the people, who struggled and pushed in a frenzy to kiss his thaumaturgic thumbs. His

long hair was combed out like that of some wizened old mermaid dredged from the depths. It was as remote from Anglican worship as Tibetan prayer-wheels. Edward let himself be sucked in and out of the crowds and eddies as he watched the long monotonous processions of collecting pots, carried like brightly coloured samples of jam among the eleemosynary faithful. Into all and sundry Edward dropped a kopeck in symbol of the Reunion of Churches.

Strolling along the Nevsky Prospect he felt his arm touched. Looking round, he found the two students who had accompanied him on the night of the railway accident. Hurriedly and delightedly they exchanged greetings. Edward recounted his visit to Yasnaya Polyana. The others looked at him greyly and said, 'You know, we have been in prison since we saw you.' 'What?' and Edward shuddered. 'Yes, we were arrested that night before we left the station. We have been released because we were travelling with permission. But you, you had no harm from Sophia Ivanovna?' 'No, not at all. That was her name, she told me.' 'She told you her name was Sophia Ivanovna?' they asked incredulously. 'And you do not know who Sophia Ivanovna is?' Edward shook his head. 'Sophia Ivanovna is one of the Black Hundred. She moves through Russia trapping the Liberals. Nobody can remember her face. It is beautiful one moment and ugly the next moment. Be careful, for all you said in the train has been sent to the police. You will be followed every hour till you have left this country.'

Edward felt alarmed. Sophia Ivanovna a spy? Was that why she had tried to steal his passport in the Cathedral and questioned him so closely and tried to worm out his hopes and wishes in coming to Russia? Edward shuddered at the deception of women. He felt as though he had slipped the net of the fowler. One of the students continued: 'The Revolution in Russia never dies. There will be a meeting at the University to-night. That is why

the streets are full of Cossacks. The meeting has been forbidden by the police. But the hour is changed. You will come with us, will you not?' Edward of course assented, and they went toward the University in search of a preliminary meal. Edward felt no qualms. It would be interesting to meet his fellow-students, and any trouble he imagined as a glorified Town and Gown rag. He did not realise that the city was already under martial law. . . . Something had happened, either a school-girl had thrown a bomb at the Minister for Education or somebody had stolen the mistress of a Grand Duke. In any case the sullen, surcoated soldiery were moving through the streets with colours flying and bands braying, while the Cossacks in their fur nightcaps and dressing-gowns, mounted on ragged polo ponies, passed to and fro. Edward contemplated these moving stacks of bayonets with horror. The memory of Tolstoy almost nerved him to throw himself on them as a pacific protest, like the monk, who threw himself into the amphitheatre to end the cruelty of the Roman games.

Perhaps it wouldn't help much, even if it sounded well in the screed of History. He would like Sophia Ivanovna to know that he had acted in the cause of Russian freedom. Perchance some opportunity might come at the evening meeting. He could imagine how well it would sound in the English Liberal Press: 'Cambridge Graduate makes protest for liberty in St. Petersburg.' And if a fatal accident occurred, he thought of the nice little notice which the O.B. was sure to write in the *Cambridge Review*.

First he must visit the British Embassy in search of a passport, without which he could not leave the country. It was a relief to find his own there, whither it had been forwarded by the Moscow police. At the Embassy no mention was made of his activities, but a Secretary asked him if he were interested in Russian politics. Why yes. In that case he was instructed to offer him a ticket to attend a session of the Third Duma that afternoon.

Edward eagerly accepted and decided to postpone his personal protest against the Romanoff Régime until he had heard the debates of that remarkable body. The First and Second Dumas had already perished, chiefly on account of their democratic character. But the police had been more successful in negotiating voting-papers for the Third, with the result that a promising assembly was in full reaction. It seemed a chance not to be missed, so an hour later Edward drove heavily muffled to the Duma with the obliging Secretary. His personal record was carefully investigated. Without his diplomatic companion he would not have been admitted.

The Duma was an amorphous amphitheatre facing a gilded tribune crowned with the inevitable portrait of the Czar. In the long rows from right to left were all possible types of the Russian Empire, peasants in sheep-skins, furred nobility, Poles, Mohammedan Tartars. Absolutism sat on the Right and Revolution on the left, and in the person of some long-haired priests Absolution in the centre. Edward felt in the presence of forces seeking to hurl themselves in inconceivable medley at each other's throats. It seemed simpler for one side to exterminate the other. Talk resolved nothing. The speeches being unintelligible, Edward sat in a dreamy stupor succeeded by despair. Was it possible to effect things by preaching or persuasion? he asked himself. Could these strange priests be persuaded of the validity of Anglican Orders? Could Cambridge men be persuaded to plough the fields between Cambridge and Ely instead of rowing in endless and useless file up and down the Cam?

The world seemed too stagnant and static to be revised or redeemed. . . . Torrents of talk were of no avail. Edward left the Duma careless and listless. It was evening, and he walked slowly through the crisp snow to the address given him in the University quarter. It was a tenement building, gaunt, cold and dispiriting. His friends were waiting for him outside an attic door. A tiny stove illuminated and warmed the garret as well as

boiled the tea. Piles of books filled the corners, even obliterating the bed. Edward felt the freemasonry of scholarship, though the books were unintelligible to him—but they really were in Chinese! . . . The meeting was held in a large pillared and white-washed lecture-room of the University, crowded and overcrowded before any speaker entered the gilded pulpit. After an hour a chairman was chosen, whereupon several simultaneous speeches were made. The necessity for making them at the same time was explained by the fact that the police were expected. Before any speaker showed the least sign of entering into peroration, the alarm was given. The police, informed by the inevitable spy, probably the most ardent of the speakers, arrived, and there was a general rush through side-doors and out of windows. Edward and his friends left by the ordinary door and walked with a score of others into a waiting net of soldiers. There was no formal arrest. They were marched off in platoons, Edward enjoying his political martyrdom with as exquisite a pleasure as he had felt in this sad, sad country. The soldiers and police were bored and uninterested during the examination of prisoners. Edward wondered what would happen when they found a British passport in his pocket. He was searched slowly. . . .

The passport was found, confiscated and remanded to higher authority. The prisoners were examined in turn and loosed into an inner courtyard between sentries. Heavy gaunt buildings surrounded them except on one side, which was hedged with high-spiked railings. It was cold. It was dark. The prisoners had ceased to be voluble. They were profoundly depressed. It grew colder. It grew darker. Edward looked at the railings. They were not higher than the railings by which he used to climb into other Colleges at Cambridge. A mist covered the corners and outlines of the court. The prisoners were moving through an open door into the further building. Edward edged towards the railings. A sentry passed once every three minutes. Edward

timed him on his watch, waited till he had passed the corner and then swarmed over the railings. A minute passed and he disappeared into mist. He walked forward but found he had not escaped. He was once more in the front court of the prison, where another herd of fifty students were arriving. Suddenly he remembered that he had placed those railings between himself and that all-precious passport, without which he could never leave the country. There was nothing to do but to slip into the arriving batch. . . . Once more he entered, was examined and searched. The surprise of the official who found him returning a second time in less than a quarter of an hour was extreme. Bells were rung and *pourparlers* were started. 'The passport was sent for, and Edward a second time discovered to correspond to its description. But neither he nor the officials could explain his second appearance. He was informed that possession of a foreign passport would lead to his immediate release, and he was asked not to refer the matter to his diplomatic envoy. At the same time the important question how the same prisoner could have entered into the building twice must be brought to the Prefect of Police, if Edward did not mind waiting in an adjoining room. . . . Time passed, as it passes in Russia, imponderably. The door opened and two figures entered. One deposited his passport on the table, saluted and withdrew. The other was Sophia Ivanovna !

She was in a riding-dress with her furs thrown over her shoulders. Her face was paler in the half-light. 'I have read your passport at last,' she said without a smile, 'and it is returned to you. When the Government of your country allow you such a paper, you should never make it to come into the hands of the criminal police. Governments must respect each other. You should not protect yourself with a passport from one Government to help people to destroy another Government.'

Edward protested : ' But I was invited by the students themselves, and it was for a good cause.' Sophia Ivan-

ovna laughed shrilly. 'What cause?' 'The cause of freedom,' Edward answered, using that indisputable phrase. 'Freedom!' hissed Sophia Ivanovna, 'freedom to kill the best lives in Russia, freedom to destroy my country, freedom to defile our holy Church. That is what your meeting was for.' 'You know I could not understand one word of what they were saying,' pleaded Edward. 'Then you were foolish to go. I know Russia better than you. You are a fool, but you will wake up from your dreaming one day. But Leo Nicolaiovitch, whom you think so great, he is an old fool and he will never wake up from his dreaming at all. He has no sting left, but his hive shelters many wasps.'

Edward spluttered feebly: 'We must all be sisters and brothers, whatever our Governments.' 'Some of your brothers would be glad to kill one of your sisters,' she shot with a keen smile. 'Not you?' She nodded, and Edward began to explain the theory of non-resistance to evil. She laughed aloud: 'Do you think me an evil which should not be resisted, do you?' Edward had nothing to say. Sophia Ivanovna was bewildering. She continued: 'Why do you come to Russia and encourage the bad Russians to kill the good? Russia has never harmed you. Because you are English and educated, you have great influence with them. What is good for England is very bad for Russia. Do not hurt my country which I love. You know not what it is to love.' She was contemptuous and fierce in her beauty.

'I think I love my Church in the way that you love your country,' answered Edward thoughtfully. 'And is not your Church a manifestation of your country?' she asked; and then imperiously: 'Go away! but I tell you this. Now you make a fool of yourself, but the day will come when you will be made a fool by women and you will become double fool.' It was Edward's time to laugh. He kissed her shapely white fingers for the third and last time. White, long, lingering fingers they

were, like those of a young surgeon. 'At midnight there is a train from Russia. Go, they will conduct you,' and Edward passed into the hands of a commissioner. . . .

Henceforth his journey became a conducted tour. He intended to envisage the Polish Question, and selected Vilna as his inspection-ground. He was anxious to see the Roman Church working in a Catholic country. . . . At Vilna a polite guard bowed him out. Hastily depositing his luggage in the first hotel he passed, Edward made his way to the Cathedral at Vilna in time to hear Mass according to the Latin rites. Round the silver-shrined dead Casimir the Polish Nationals prayed to a Saint, who was a Pole like unto themselves. In the streets he saw Poles shudder, when they passed the Orthodox priests. The city seemed divided in the struggle between the two Christian religions, while the Jews, from whom both were derived, simmered in Ghettoes between. Sentries were needed to guard the statue of Catherine the Great by day and night. Heavy upon the town lay the unwelcome paws of Russian Militarism and Orthodoxy. Edward spent the day recuperating himself in the Latin churches. He felt at home in them again. Rome, the mistress of the West, assuaged his heart. He could feel that Latin was his language. He was irrevocably of the Western and not the Oriental Church. The visible altars and figured Crucifixes meant something to him that he had never found in the gorgeous Ikonostas of Moscow. In memory's retrospect the Russian churches rose like mosques. The Russian Christ, hanging like some exotic, sad-eyed, jewel-crusted God, gilded with the offerings of the centuries, seemed as remote as Orion. It was a Christ, who could not wrench Himself from the great Ikonostas and come among the multitudes, but stayed stiffly behind the hedge of myriad candles to be adored like a sweet-scented mummy, incorrupt as on the day He absorbed the spices of Joseph of Arimathæa's tomb. Oh that Orthodox Christ with far-away and

weak un pitying eyes, and long white fingers like the fingers of Sophia Ivanovna ! But the Latin Christ was human, a Mediterranean Apollo made of Italian flesh and blood and speaking through an understandable tongue, whether He uttered the solemn phrases of the Latin Vulgate or wept in the delicate diapason of Roman liturgy !

It was a soothing day for Edward, and he retired to rest early, intending to leave the dominions of the Czar for ever on the following day. He was thinking of the wonder-tales he would bring to his friends in England, lecturing to the workmen in the East of London about Tolstoy, or submitting his view of the Orthodox Church to the Community at Plaistow. He felt mildly important already. One day he might be slightly famous. Repressing these vainer fancies of the mind, he was falling asleep, when the door was violently shaken by knocks. His landlord appeared in the doorway. Edward noticed that he was a Jew. Matted hair fell down his coarse neck. Edward wondered whether the Christ resembled this specimen of sallow Semitism or the refined fanaticism of silk-haired Russian priests. The landlord was talking to him in German, which was not one of Edward's languages. He pressed something on him very eagerly and began counting on his greasy fingers. It could not be the hotel-bill already. Edward guessed that he was proposing a tourist's expedition in the morning and shook his head, pointing to his baggage and imitating the puffing of a train, whereupon the landlord made a sign behind his back and was reinforced by a girl bedizened in Polish dress. For one wild moment Edward believed that he was trying to press a daughter on him in marriage. But as the financial calculations continued, he reluctantly abandoned any idea of an honourable proposal. The young lady suggestively began to remove her picturesque dress, while the kind gentleman held out his hand even more questingly. Edward realised that his virtue was at stake. Pressed into a corner, he

determined to make a fight for it. If his virtue was to fall, it would not be to a painted hireling in a low Jewish hotel. What a fool he had been to come there at all!

He began by making an ejaculation to St. Joseph. Then he prayed sweetly unto One, who was conceived without sin, and he felt better. His prayers had no effect on the absurd creatures who were troubling his peace. So Edward sat up in bed, clenched his fists in a threatening manner and shouted, '*Ego sum sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchizedek.*' It was more than a Latin motto. It was like a talisman. It had been on the lips of so many Cambridge friends. Jasper and Colley used it mysteriously of their futures. Father John and Father Rolle had built their lives round that chance old Biblical phrase. They believed they were priests for ever. Edward had yearned thereto no less, though what's he to Melchizedek or Melchizedek to him? he thought.

The fragile partitions of the hotel trembled like the walls of Jericho and the tempter fled, leaving Edward alone with the frightened girl. He pitied her with the pity of Parsival and extended the symbol of a helping hand, but she mistook his gesture. For the first time Edward found himself with a woman God-fashioned but not God-given. Not to embrace those embarrassing curves had he left his native land and travelled into Muscovy. Far other and nobler was his mission . . . swiftly he prayed. . . . He felt the keen elation as of the prophets, who came to salve Humanity. It was perhaps a form of intellectual pride. Philosophers think they are God, lovers feel that they are, and prophets say they are, or at least the voice of God. Edward was in a mood to cry aloud to his fellows—Thus saith the Lord! This wretched child made him nervous and ridiculous. She did not seem to realise his spirituality. Had she no modesty? Gracious in heaven! did she take him for a sensual bagman? She held his knees

and clambered timidly towards him. This was too much and he shook her off gently. She persisted. . . . Then he realised that the crisis had come upon him of which he had been warned all his life, his first encounter with that great enemy of man called Woman. Jasper had often hinted, Jack Colley had bidden him beware, and Father John had spoken luridly of the peril. It had to come sooner or later. Once to every man and every nation comes the moment to decide, and here came Edward's. It was hardly the intoxicating temptation he expected. But he was bound to act from a high level in these degrading and rather ludicrous circumstances. He could take no risks, so with some priggishness he thrust her away. For a second she quailed under his look as though it had been whipcord. Then she turned her back contemptuously and scurried out of the room. Edward lay unangrily back in bed and put out the light. *Laus Deo*, he was a virgin yet ! . . . At dawn he crossed the frontiers of the Russian Empire.

The train never stopped sliding through Europe. Edward was wool-spinning all the way, trying to disentangle and cut the threads of his life. What he was going to be was not clear. For the moment he was busy crossing frontiers. The domestic frontier and the Cambridge frontier were far behind. Even the Anglican frontier was past. He was as far from the idyll of Cherryumpton Rectory as a wild duckling from the hencoop. The years at Cambridge left a tranquil ecstasy in his memory. King's had crystallised his religious ideal as an Anglo-Catholic, fantastic as the term seemed now, as though race and religion could combine except in the word Jew ! And Rome in theory followed by Russia in practice had flawed his ideal. He had desired certainty with youth's hot desire, but Rome had proclaimed that Anglican Orders were uncertain. He had followed the Absolute even into Russia, and in the land of Absolutism he had been denied his wish. Was nothing certain in heaven or earth, no Absolute in religion or in rowing ?

If his mind were not settled now, it might never be. He had done his best, but good intentions and vain-glorious purposes had led him nowhere. He had not solved the dilemma of Good and Evil during three years at King's. Sometimes he scarcely knew which was which. Virtue was as often punishable as vice in this world of antipodes. It was his head not his conscience that troubled him most. He had kept to his ideal of sane body and mind, clean in mind from heresy and clean in body from women.

He had gone further and tried to redress some of the distressing schism which littered Christendom. To save Anglicanism, he had made the only possible test and he had failed. It was not his fault. He was glad that luckily he was not responsible for the Reformation nor for the rather terrifying Universe around him. He must leave Church affairs to God. If He wanted Anglicans to acknowledge the Pope, if He wanted Rome and Russia to be one fold, let Him act instead of watching and breathing His Pentecostal breath into so many troublesome sects and schisms.

During grim moments his mind returned to Lucretius, who saw certainty in the annihilation of desire in the grave. Death was the Absolute. What were those lines he had translated as a melancholy boy about dead men?

'Then shall they say of thee, Misery, oh, misery! for one unhallowed day hath taken the rewards of living from thee.

'But they shall add thereto, saying that thy desire hath perished.

'For if men but perceived in their mind and followed rightly of speech,

'Then would they release their soul from sorrow and deliver their heart from fear.

'For when thou art sunken unto death, thou shalt die for ever, and neither grief nor bitterness shall touch thee.'

The beat of the Latin Hexameters paced the pulse of the train-carriage:—

*Misero, misere, aiunt, omnia ademit
 Una dies infesta tibi tot praemia vitae.
 Illud in his rebus non addunt—nec tibi earum
 Iam desiderium rerum super insidet una.
 Quod bene si videant animo dictisque sequantur,
 Dissolvant animi magno se angore metuque.
 Tu quidem ut es leto sopitus, sic eris aevi
 Quod super est cunctis privatus doloribus aegris.*

Edward felt glad too that he had not invented Religion. It all seemed such a terrible tangle and, as Edge said, the best apology for the Catholic system was that it helped God to release Himself from His own mess. The Crucifixion redeemed Man, but it also redeemed God. It seemed strange to invent Sex and Religion and watch their results through all eternity. He thanked God he was not God! . . . Very humbly he surveyed himself. He had somehow steered clear of Sex, and now he had no particular Religion to bring into the East End of London. He must find his religion there. . . . To Cambridge he had given three years, but she had given him no qualification except to vaunt himself a CANTAB!

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